

Für meine zwei Liebsten

Survey-Feedback in internationalen Organisationen: Affektive Einflüsse auf organisationale Einstellungen

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Zusammenfassung

Die diese Arbeit umfassenden empirischen Studien beschäftigen sich mit der Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität im Einfluss auf organisationale Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext. Die Fragestellungen, die sich daraus ableiten lassen, werden anhand von Survey-Feedback-Daten von Stichproben aus großen internationalen Unternehmen über 30 bis 41 Länder hinweg untersucht. Ziel dieser Arbeit ist es, wichtige Einflussfaktoren auf organisationale Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext zu identifizieren, um im Rahmen von Survey-Feedback-Prozessen fehlerhaften Schlussfolgerungen von Unterschieden zwischen Nationen in organisationalen Einstellungen entgegen zu wirken. Dabei wird der Fokus auf kulturelle Affektivität gerichtet, da bisherige Studien zu kulturellen Einflussfaktoren, wie zum Beispiel zu klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980), keinen systematischen Zusammenhang mit organisationalen Einstellungen aufwiesen. In den vorliegenden Studien wird angenommen, dass kulturelle Affektivität einen robusten Zusammenhang mit organisationalen Einstellungen aufweist und einen guten Prädiktor zur Erklärung von Unterschieden in organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext darstellt. Diese Annahme kann für alle untersuchten organisationalen Einstellungen bestätigt werden - mit Ausnahme der Kundenzufriedenheit. Mögliche Gründe hierfür werden in dem folgenden Übersichtspapier an entsprechender Stelle dargestellt. Insgesamt deuten die Ergebnisse auf einen robusten Zusammenhang von kultureller Affektivität und organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext hin und liefern damit eine Unterstützung des neueren Forschungsbestrebens, den Zusammenhang von Kultur und Affekt als potenzielle Erklärung nationaler Unterschiede heranzuziehen (z. B. Gelade, Dobson & Gilbert, 2006). Für die organisationale Praxis verdeutlichen diese Ergebnisse die Notwendigkeit bei der Interpretation von organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext nationale Unterschiede in der kulturellen Affektivität zu berücksichtigen.

1. Artikel

Diese Inauguraldissertation basiert auf einer Zusammenstellung von drei Artikeln. Zwei dieser Artikel wurden bereits publiziert, ein Artikel ist fertig gestellt. Die Artikel sind dem Übersichtspapier in der Reihenfolge beigelegt, in der sie im Folgenden besprochen werden:

- (1) Mueller, K., Hattrup, K. & Hausmann, N. (2009). An investigation of cross-national differences in positivity and job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(3), 465-707.
- (2) Hausmann, N., Mueller, K., Hattrup, K. & Straatmann, T. (2011). *Cross-national generalizability of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Mannheim.
- (3) Hausmann, N., Mueller, K., Hattrup, K. & Spiess, S.-O. (2013). An investigation of the relationships between affective organizational commitment and national differences in positivity and life satisfaction. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 62(2), 260-285.

2. Einleitung und theoretischer Hintergrund

Diese Inauguraldissertation befasst sich mit der Interpretation von Survey-Feedback-Ergebnissen in internationalen Organisationen. Dabei kommt der Frage nach der internationalen Generalisierbarkeit von Befragungsergebnissen eine besondere Bedeutung zu. Damit die erhaltenen Informationen nicht zu falschen Schlussfolgerungen und somit zu falschen zentralen und dezentralen Entscheidungen führen, ist eine Berücksichtigung des Einflusses kultureller Variablen wichtig (z. B. Ryan, Chan, Ployhart & Slade, 1999). In diesem Rahmen wird in der vorliegenden Arbeit der Einfluss von kultureller Affektivität auf organisationale Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext untersucht. Im folgenden Kapitel werden zunächst die Ziele und der Nutzen von Survey-Feedback - besonders in internationalen Organisationen - dargestellt. Da die Entwicklung der bisherigen Forschung zu kulturellen Einflüssen auf organisationale Einstellungen die Basis der Forschungsfragen dieser Arbeit ist, wird diese Entwicklung im nächsten Schritt zusammengefasst dargestellt. Nachfolgend wird das eigene Forschungsprogramm vorgestellt. Abschließend werden Zusammenfassungen der dem Übersichtspapier zugrundeliegenden Artikel aufgeführt, gefolgt von einer abschließenden Diskussion der Implikationen und Einschränkungen des Forschungsprogramms sowie des Ausblicks auf zukünftige Forschungsfragen.

2.1 Survey-Feedback in internationalen Organisationen

Einstellungen von Mitarbeitern werden von Unternehmen immer häufiger als wichtige, sogenannte weiche Erfolgsfaktoren angesehen (Evans, Pucik & Barsoux, 2002). Aus diesem Grund wird Survey-Feedback bei einer Vielzahl von Organisationen in regelmäßigen Abständen durchgeführt. Survey-Feedback ermöglicht die Erfassung der Meinungen der Mitarbeiter, um einen Überblick über das Einstellungsspektrum zu bekommen, den Anstoß zur Organisationsentwicklung, die direkte Kommunikation zwischen Mitarbeitern und Unternehmensführung, die Problemidentifikation und Ableitung von Maßnahmen sowie die Kontrolle und Bewertung von Veränderungsprozessen (Bungard, Holling & Schultz-Gambard, 1996; Dunham & Smith, 1979).

Folgende Einstellungskonstrukte finden sowohl in der Praxis als auch im Rahmen der Survey-Feedback-Forschung große Beachtung: Arbeitszufriedenheit, affektives organisationales Commitment beziehungsweise affektive Verbundenheit der Mitarbeiter gegenüber des Unternehmens, Kundenzufriedenheit und Kundenloyalität. Der Hintergrund

der Bedeutsamkeit von Arbeitszufriedenheit und affektivem organisationalem Commitment für den Unternehmenserfolg liegt in den theoretischen und empirischen Zusammenhängen mit anderen wichtigen Variablen organisationalen Verhaltens, wie zum Beispiel Arbeitsleistung, Abwesenheit und Kündigungsabsicht (z. B. Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch & Topolnysky, 2002). Auch Kundeneinstellungen haben eine zentrale Rolle für den Unternehmenserfolg. Starke Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität zeigen beispielsweise positive Zusammenhänge mit verringerten Kundenbeschwerderaten, mit dem Wiederkaufverhalten und mit der Gesamtunternehmensleistung (z. B. Anderson, Fornell & Lehmann, 1992; Bolton, 1998; Brady & Robertson, 2001; Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1988; Hallowell, 1996). Somit stellt die Steigerung beziehungsweise Aufrechterhaltung der Mitarbeiter- und Kundenzufriedenheit sowie der Mitarbeiter- und Kundenloyalität ein wichtiges Anliegen für viele Unternehmen dar (z. B. Anderson & Mittal, 2000; Johnson, M. D., Gustafsson, Andreassen, Lervik & Cha, 2001; Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002; Landry, Panaccio & Vandenberghe, 2010). Dies verdeutlicht, dass dem Instrument Survey-Feedback in der betrieblichen Praxis, insbesondere im Rahmen von Aktivitäten des sogenannten Retention Managements um Mitarbeiter langfristig an das Unternehmen zu binden, aber auch im Rahmen von Aktivitäten zur Kundenbindung, eine wichtige Rolle zukommt.

Für international tätige Unternehmen ist Survey-Feedback besonders von Bedeutung. Internationale Unternehmen bekommen eine immer wichtigere Stellung und unterscheiden sich nach Adler (2002) in zweierlei Hinsicht von nationalen Unternehmen: Internationale Unternehmen weisen eine weit größere geographische Ausbreitung auf und ihre Mitarbeiter stammen aus weitaus mehr Kulturen. Dadurch entsteht im Vergleich zu nationalen Unternehmen eine größere Komplexität bezüglich der organisationalen Koordination. Hierbei nimmt das Survey-Feedback eine wichtige Rolle ein: Die Ermittlung von Mitarbeiter Einstellungen, wie der Arbeitszufriedenheit sowie der Verbundenheit der Mitarbeiter gegenüber des Unternehmens, ermöglicht eine länderübergreifende Kommunikation bezüglich der von Mitarbeitern wahrgenommenen Situation innerhalb des Unternehmens und trägt damit zu einem zentral gesteuerten, internationalen Human Resource Management bei. Die Erfassung von Kundeneinstellungen, wie der Zufriedenheit der Kunden und ihrer Loyalität gegenüber Dienstleistungen und Produkten des Unternehmens, ermöglicht hingegen eine zentrale Abstimmung von Marketingstrategien auf lokale Kundenbedürfnisse trotz geographischer Entfernungen. Außerdem bieten

internationale Unternehmensbefragungen die Überprüfung der Wirksamkeit und Akzeptanz von organisationalen Praktiken und Prozessen (Dunham & Smith, 1979).

Wie bereits erwähnt, kommt der Frage nach der internationalen Generalisierbarkeit von Befragungsergebnissen bei der Durchführung von Survey-Feedback in internationalen Organisationen und dem Vergleich von Survey-Feedback-Ergebnissen über Länder hinweg eine besondere Bedeutung zu. Hierbei ist die Berücksichtigung des Einflusses kultureller Variablen essentiell, damit die erhaltenen Informationen nicht zu falschen Schlussfolgerungen und somit zu falschen zentralen und dezentralen Entscheidungen führen (z. B. Ryan et al., 1999). Insbesondere aufgrund einer zunehmenden Globalisierung der Wirtschaft wächst der Bedarf an Untersuchungen zur interkulturellen Generalisierbarkeit von organisationspsychologischen Theorien sowie empirischen Befunden stetig (z. B. Triandis, 1994). Studien zum Einfluss kultureller Variablen auf organisationale Einstellungen standen bislang jedoch kaum im Zentrum interkultureller Forschung (z. B. Gelade, Dobson & Auer, 2008; Judge, Parker, Colbert, Heller & Ilies, 2001; Spreng & Chiou, 2002). Der folgende Abschnitt liefert eine kurze Zusammenfassung der bisherigen Forschung zu kulturellen Einflüssen auf die oben aufgeführten, für die Survey-Feedback-Forschung und betriebliche Praxis bedeutsamen, Einstellungskonstrukte, um im Anschluss daran die eigenen Forschungsfragen vorzustellen.

2.2 Kulturelle Einflüsse im Rahmen der Survey-Feedback-Forschung

2.2.1 Kulturelle Einflüsse auf Arbeitszufriedenheit

Einige Studien zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Höhe der Arbeitszufriedenheit untersuchten kulturelle Fragestellungen anhand von Daten aus einer kleinen Anzahl an Ländern oder sogar aus ausschließlich zwei Ländern (z. B. England & Negandhi, 1979; Slocum, 1971; Spector & Wimalasiri, 1986). Es ist jedoch schwer, auf Basis einer geringen Anzahl von Ländern valide Aussagen über kulturelle Einflussgrößen treffen zu können, ohne weitere potenzielle Alternativerklärungen, wie beispielsweise Unterschiede in objektiven Gegebenheiten, Zustimmungstendenzen oder Stichprobenunterschiede, auszuschließen (Brett, Tinsley, Janssens, Barsness & Lytle, 1997). Haire, Ghiselli und Porter (1966) untersuchten erstmals nationale Unterschiede in Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten für eine

Vielzahl an Nationen. Sie nutzten Daten aus insgesamt 14 Ländern und beobachteten geringere Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte unter Befragungsteilnehmern aus Argentinien, Chile, Indien, Italien und Spanien. Probanden aus Schweden berichteten den höchsten Zufriedenheitswert. Obwohl Haire und Kollegen (1966) die beobachteten nationalen Unterschiede argumentativ auf kulturelle Einflüsse zurückführten, wurden kulturelle Einflussvariablen in ihrer Studie weder definiert noch gemessen. Aktuellere multinationale Studien lieferten ebenfalls keine kulturellen Erklärungen bezüglich der gefundenen nationalen Unterschiede in der Höhe der Arbeitszufriedenheit (z. B. Hatrup, Mueller & Aguirre, 2007; Liu, C., Borg & Spector, 2004; Oishi, Diener, Lucas & Suh, 1999).

Bislang hat nur eine sehr kleine Anzahl an Studien die Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in der Arbeitszufriedenheit und Variationen in kulturellen Variablen untersucht. Zum Beispiel nutzte die Forschergruppe ISR (International Survey Research, 2002) die klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) als Erklärungsdimensionen für nationale Unterschiede in Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten. Grundlage für die Zusammenhangsanalyse waren zwei auf Basis der kulturellen Wertedimensionen berechnete Indizes. Der erste kulturelle Werte-Index wurde aus der Kombination der Machtdistanz- und Individualismus/Kollektivismus-Dimensionen berechnet, der zweite Index aus der Kombination der Dimensionen Maskulinität/Femininität und Unsicherheitsvermeidung. Insgesamt wurden Daten aus 10 Ländern untersucht. Die Ergebnisse zeigten keinen signifikanten Zusammenhang der Werte-Indizes mit den Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten auf Nationalniveau. Ähnliche Ergebnisse wurden in einer Studie von C. H. Hui, Yee und Eastman (1995) festgestellt. Die Autoren untersuchten den Zusammenhang von nationalen Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten für insgesamt 14 Nationen und Hofstedes (1980) Individualismus/Kollektivismus-Dimension und konnten ebenfalls keine signifikante Beziehung zwischen nationalen Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten und Individualismus/Kollektivismus feststellen. Eine aktuellere Studie zum Zusammenhang kultureller Wertedimensionen von Hofstede mit nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit stammt von Huang und Van de Vliert (2004). Basierend auf Daten einer multinationalen Organisation mit Sitz in 39 Ländern konnten sie eine signifikante Korrelation zwischen Arbeitszufriedenheit und Individualismus/Kollektivismus feststellen. In einer weiteren aktuelleren Studie wurde mittels Daten von 33 Nationen aus der World Values Survey II ein bedeutsamer Zusammenhang von nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit und kultureller Machtdistanz ermittelt (Hui, M. K., Au & Fock, 2004).

Zusammenfassend kann festgestellt werden, dass einige Studien mit Fokus auf nationale Unterschiede in der Arbeitszufriedenheit existieren, dass darunter jedoch nur in wenigen jüngeren Studien die beobachteten Länderunterschiede mit systematischen Variationen in kulturellen Variablen in Bezug gesetzt wurden. Zur Erklärung kultureller Einflüsse auf nationale Unterschiede in der Arbeitszufriedenheit wurden in der Mehrzahl dieser Studien kulturelle Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) herangezogen. Insgesamt zeigten die Ergebnisse bezüglich des Zusammenhangs von nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit und kulturellen Wertdimensionen jedoch widersprüchliche Befunde. Eine systematische Beziehung der Wertedimensionen mit nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit konnte somit nicht bestätigt werden.

2.2.2 Kulturelle Einflüsse auf Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität

Bislang existieren wenige Studien zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität (Gorn, 1997; Spreng & Chiou, 2002). Die meisten Studien zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität fokussierten ausschließlich auf Aspekte der interkulturellen Messäquivalenz (z. B. Gilbert, Veloutsou, Goode & Moutinho, 2004; Spreng & Chiou, 2002; Ueltschy, Laroche, Eggert & Bindl, 2007). Dies stellt jedoch nur eine Voraussetzung für die Testung inhaltlicher Hypothesen zum Einfluss von Kultur auf Kundeneinstellungen dar. Die wenigen Studien, die über die Untersuchung der Messäquivalenz hinausgingen, basierten häufig auf einer kleinen Anzahl an Ländern oder sogar nur auf zwei Ländern (z. B. Brady & Robertson, 2001; Gilbert et al., 2004; Ueltschy et al., 2007). Weiterhin konnten ein paar Zusammenhänge mit klassischen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) gezeigt werden (z. B. Crotts & Erdmann, 2000; Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Espinoza, 1999; Furrer, Liu & Sudharshan, 2000). Wie bereits in Abschnitt 2.2.1 erwähnt, beeinflussen Hofstedes (1980) kulturelle Wertedimensionen, insbesondere Individualismus/Kollektivismus, die bisherige Forschung zu kulturellen Unterschieden stark.

Zusammenfassend kann festgestellt werden, dass bislang wenig Forschung zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität über die Untersuchung der interkulturellen Messäquivalenz hinaus existiert und dass ein paar Zusammenhänge mit klassischen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) gefunden werden konnten. Eine detailliertere Untersuchung kultureller Einflüsse auf Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität im Sinne einer Betrachtung weiterer kultureller Einflussvariablen steht somit bislang aus.

2.2.3 Kulturelle Einflüsse auf affektives organisationales Commitment

Trotz eines großen Interesses in der interkulturellen Forschung an dem Konstrukt des affektiven organisationalen Commitments (z. B. Morrow, 1993) existieren bislang wenige Studien zur Untersuchung nationaler Unterschiede in der Höhe des affektiven Commitments. Zum Beispiel stellte Cole (1979) ein signifikant niedrigeres affektives Commitment unter japanischen Arbeitnehmern als unter US-amerikanischen Mitarbeitern fest. In einer Studie basierend auf Daten von Mitarbeitern aus Japan, Korea und den USA, zeigten Dubinsky, Michaels, Kotabe, Lim und Moon (1992) die niedrigsten Commitmentwerte unter Koreanern, gefolgt von den Commitmentwerten unter Japanern und die höchsten Werte unter US-Amerikanern. Insgesamt handelt es sich bei diesen Studien um rein deskriptive Untersuchungen von nationalen Unterschieden in der Höhe des affektiven Commitments; potenzielle kulturelle Erklärungen der beobachteten Länderunterschiede wurden nicht herangezogen.

Bislang existiert nur eine sehr geringe Anzahl an Studien, welche die Beziehung kultureller Variablen und affektivem organisationalem Commitment untersucht. Diese Studien wurden ebenfalls stark durch die klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) beeinflusst. Studien mit Fokus auf die Dimension Individualismus/Kollektivismus finden sich hierbei am Häufigsten. So fand Cohen (1999) beispielsweise mittels Daten von arabischen und jüdischen Arbeitern in Israel Unterstützung für seine Annahme, dass organisationales Commitment unter kollektivistischen Kulturen höher ausfällt als unter individualistischen Kulturen. In einer Studie mit Daten auf Individualniveau aus Australien und Süd-Ost-Asien zeigten Parkes, Bochner und Schneider (2001) höheres Commitment unter Kollektivisten als unter Individualisten in asiatischen, jedoch nicht in australischen Unternehmen. In einer weiteren Studie auf Individualniveau konnten Dubinsky, Kotabe, Lim und Wagener (1997) zeigen, dass individualistische Werte 6% der Varianz an organisationalem Commitment in einer US-amerikanischen Stichprobe erklärten sowie dass kollektivistische Werte 7% der Varianz an organisationalem Commitment in einer japanischen Stichprobe erklärten. Problematisch an den soeben aufgeführten Studien ist jedoch die geringe Anzahl an Nationen, welche den Untersuchungen zugrunde gelegt wurde. Wie bereits erwähnt, ist es folglich kritisch, Schlussfolgerungen bezüglich der Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in einem Konstrukt und untersuchten kulturellen Variablen zu ziehen (Brett et al., 1997).

Nur wenige Studien haben eine substanzielle Anzahl an Nationen in ihre Untersuchung zum Einfluss von Individualismus/Kollektivismus auf nationale Unterschiede in affektiven organisationalen Commitmentwerten einbezogen. Zum Beispiel nutzten Hattrup, Mueller und Aguirre (2008) Daten von zwei Stichproben mit 10 beziehungsweise 25 Ländern. In beiden Stichproben konnte keine signifikante Beziehung zwischen affektivem Commitment und Individualismus/Kollektivismus gefunden werden. Auch die Ergebnisse einer Studie an 36 Nationen von Gelade und Kollegen (2006) zeigten keine bedeutsamen Zusammenhänge von affektivem Commitment mit Individualismus/Kollektivismus. Auch die Meta-Analyse von Fischer und Mansell (2009) zeigte wenig Unterstützung für die Beziehung klassischer Wertedimensionen und nationalen Unterschieden in affektivem Commitment.

Zusammenfassend kann festgestellt werden, dass bislang wenige Studien zur Untersuchung der Beziehung von kulturellen Variablen und affektivem organisationalem Commitment existieren und diese zudem häufig auf einer geringen Anzahl an untersuchten Ländern basierten. Ihr Fokus lag bislang auf der klassischen kulturellen Wertedimension Individualismus/Kollektivismus. Ergebnisse zeigten jedoch wenig Unterstützung bezüglich einer systematischen Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in affektivem Commitment und Individualismus/Kollektivismus.

2.2.4 Zusammenfassung und neuere Forschungsbestreben

Bislang existieren nur vereinzelt Studien, welche die Beziehung zwischen kulturellen Variablen und organisationalen Einstellungen untersuchten. Ein Großteil der bisherigen Forschung konzentrierte sich hingegen auf eine deskriptive Untersuchung nationaler Unterschiede. Zudem basierten frühere Studien oftmals auf Daten aus wenigen Ländern, was eine Erklärung nationaler Unterschiede aufgrund einer Vielzahl an existierenden Alternativerklärungen, wie etwa Unterschieden in objektiven Gegebenheiten oder Stichprobenunterschieden, erschwert (Brett et al., 1997).

Insgesamt kann festgehalten werden, dass trotz eines großen Interesses an der Erforschung nationaler Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen eine ausführliche Untersuchung einer systematischen Beziehung von nationalen Unterschieden in organisationalen Einstellungen und kulturellen Variablen bislang größtenteils ausblieb (z. B. Gelade et al., 2008; Judge, Parker, Colbert, Heller & Ilies, 2001; Spreng & Chiou, 2002).

Vereinzelte Studien untersuchten bereits kulturelle Einflussfaktoren, fokussierten hierbei jedoch oftmals auf kulturelle Wertedimensionen nach Hofstede (1980), insbesondere auf die Individualismus/Kollektivismus-Dimension. Insgesamt zeigten die Studien widersprüchliche Befunde zum Zusammenhang zwischen Hofstedes (1980) kulturellen Wertedimensionen und organisationalen Einstellungen. Somit weisen die Ergebnisse nicht auf eine systematische Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in organisationalen Einstellungen und Hofstedes (1980) Wertedimensionen hin.

Basierend auf diesen Befunden wurde in jüngerer Zeit der Fokus auf kulturelle Wertedimensionen zur Erklärung nationaler Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen geringer. Als Vorreiter dieser Entwicklung können Gelfand, Erez und Aycan (2007) gesehen werden. In ihrem Übersichtsartikel zu interkulturellem organisationalem Verhalten argumentieren sie dafür, dass „future research sorely needs to move beyond the IC [Individualism/Collectivism] obsession to explore other constructs that explain cultural differences“ (Gelfand et al., 2007, S. 496). Infolgedessen gelangen zunehmend alternative kulturelle Erklärungsvariablen in den Blick der Untersuchungen. Ein besonders starkes und konsistent wachsendes Interesse besteht dabei an der Beziehung zwischen Affekt und Kultur (z. B. Diener, Scollon, Oishi, Dzokoto & Suh, 2000; Gelade et al., 2006; Lynn & Martin, 1995). Trotz dieses zunehmenden Interesses gab es bislang keine Studien, die die Robustheit von kultureller Affektivität als Erklärung von organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext untersuchten und ist daher Fokus dieser Arbeit.

Im folgenden Abschnitt werden die offenen Forschungsfragen zusammengefasst vorgestellt.

2.3 Offene Forschungsfragen

Ziel der folgenden drei Studien ist es, den Einfluss von kultureller Affektivität auf die für die organisationspsychologische Forschung und Praxis relevanten organisationalen Einstellungen Mitarbeiter- und Kundenzufriedenheit sowie affektives organisationales Commitment und Kundenloyalität im internationalen Kontext zu untersuchen.

Zur Operationalisierung von kultureller Affektivität wird eine vielversprechende kulturelle Erklärungsvariable von nationalen Unterschieden aus der Lebenszufriedenheitsforschung heran gezogen. Hierbei handelt es sich um das Konstrukt der

kulturellen Positivität. Kulturelle Positivität wird definiert als die Tendenz von Mitgliedern einer kulturellen Gruppe „to view life experiences in a rosy light because they value positive affect and a positive view of life“ (Diener et al., 2000, S. 160). Nach Diener und Kollegen (2000) wird kulturelle Positivität durch länderspezifische Normen und Sozialisationsprozesse vermittelt und beeinflusst hierdurch individuelle Wahrnehmungen und Sichtweisen, die Erinnerung von Informationen und Erfahrungen sowie das Treffen von Entscheidungen. Ihre Annahme, dass kulturelle Positivität einen signifikanten Zusammenhang mit nationaler Lebenszufriedenheit hat, konnte bestätigt werden (vgl. Diener et al., 2000). Sogar unter Kontrolle der potenziellen Einflussgröße nationaler Wohlstand zeigte kulturelle Positivität weiterhin einen inkrementellen Aufklärungsanteil an der Varianz von nationaler Lebenszufriedenheit. Somit erwies sich kulturelle Positivität in der Lebenszufriedenheitsforschung als bedeutsame kulturelle Erklärungsvariable für nationale Unterschiede. Diese Ergebnisse deuten auf die potenziell vielversprechende Bedeutung von kultureller Positivität als Erklärungsvariable für organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext hin. Müller (2006) untersuchte in seiner Inauguraldissertation erstmals den Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität und Arbeitszufriedenheit und trug das Konstrukt somit in den Bereich organisationaler Einstellungen. Er konnte zeigen, dass verschiedene Positivitätsmaße positiv mit nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit korrelierten.

Die folgenden drei Studien bauen auf den bisherigen Studien auf, indem sie den Einfluss kultureller Affektivität, unter Kontrolle weiterer potenzieller Einflussgrößen, auf folgende relevante organisationale Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext untersuchen: Arbeitszufriedenheit (Studie 1), Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität (Studie 2) sowie affektives organisationales Commitment (Studie 3). In Studie 3 wird der Einfluss von kultureller Affektivität zudem über ein weiteres Konstrukt operationalisiert, um die Robustheit von kulturellem Affekt zu untersuchen (s. Abschnitt 3.3).

Die drei Studien werden in dem folgenden Kapitel in zusammengefasster Form dargestellt.

3. Zusammenfassungen der Artikel

Vorab sei darauf hingewiesen, dass, wie auch bei dem Großteil der bisher geschilderten Studien, zur Untersuchung der kulturellen Fragestellungen in dieser Arbeit nationale Unterschiede betrachtet werden. Nach Georgas, van de Vijver und Berry (2004) werden in der Literatur gewöhnlicherweise nationale Grenzen zur Operationalisierung von Kultur verwendet. Hofstede und Peterson (2000) machen zudem darauf aufmerksam, dass es valide Gründe zu der Annahme gibt, dass in einer Vielzahl kultureller Dimensionen und Muster wichtige Unterschiede zwischen Nationen existieren. Aus diesem Grund scheint eine solche Operationalisierung von Kultur als gerechtfertigt und wird in den folgenden drei Studien verfolgt.

3.1 Die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität zur Erklärung von Unterschieden in der Arbeitszufriedenheit

Mueller, K., Hattrup, K. & Hausmann, N. (2009). An investigation of cross-national differences in positivity and job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(3), 465-707.

Wie bereits in Abschnitt 2.2.1 aufgeführt, hat bislang nur eine sehr kleine Anzahl an Studien die Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in der Arbeitszufriedenheit und Variationen in kulturellen Variablen untersucht. Einige Studien zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Höhe der Arbeitszufriedenheit untersuchten kulturelle Fragestellungen anhand von Daten aus einer geringen Anzahl von Ländern oder sogar aus ausschließlich zwei Ländern (z. B. England & Negandhi, 1979; Slocum, 1971; Spector & Wimalasiri, 1986). Des Weiteren wurden nur in wenigen jüngeren Studien die beobachteten Länderunterschiede mit systematischen Variationen in kulturellen Variablen in Bezug gesetzt. Zur Erklärung kultureller Einflüsse auf nationale Unterschiede in der Arbeitszufriedenheit wurden in der Mehrzahl dieser Studien die kulturellen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) herangezogen. Insgesamt zeigten die Ergebnisse bezüglich des Zusammenhangs von nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit und kulturellen Wertedimensionen jedoch widersprüchliche Befunde.

Daher ist es das Ziel dieser Studie den starken Fokus auf kulturelle Wertedimensionen zu überwinden und kulturelle Affektivität als potenzielle

Alternativerklärung für nationale Unterschiede in der Arbeitszufriedenheit zu untersuchen. Wie in Abschnitt 2.3 erwähnt, wird zur Operationalisierung von kultureller Affektivität eine vielversprechende kulturelle Erklärungsvariable von nationalen Unterschieden aus der Lebenszufriedenheitsforschung heran gezogen. Hierbei handelt es sich um das Konstrukt der kulturellen Positivität. Zur Untersuchung der Fragestellung werden die von Suh und Oishi (2002) und Diener und Kollegen (2000) berichteten, sowie eigens ermittelte Positivitätswerte auf Nationalniveau herangezogen.

Im ersten Schritt wird die konvergente Validität der Positivitätswerte ermittelt. Frühere Studien zeigten unabhängig von den verwendeten Positivitätsmaßen konsistent hohe Werte in Lateinamerika sowie konsistent niedrige Werte in den pazifischen Randgebieten (z. B. Suh & Oishi, 2002; Diener et al., 2000). Deshalb wird in dieser Studie angenommen, dass sowohl die in bisherigen Studien berichteten Positivitätswerte, als auch die eigens ermittelten Werte, ein konsistentes Muster nationaler Unterschiede erkennen lassen. Die erste Hypothese der Studie lautet somit:

Hypothese 1: *Cross-national differences in positivity reported in the literature correlate across studies, and correlate positively with positivity scores derived from job satisfaction data in the present study.*

Zur weiteren Untersuchung der konvergenten Validität wird der Zusammenhang zwischen kultureller Positivität und Extraversion auf Nationalniveau betrachtet. Hierbei wird auf Extraversionswerte von van Hemert, van de Vijver, Poortinga und Georgas (2002) und McCrae (2002) zurückgegriffen. Es wird angenommen, dass Extraversion auf Nationalniveau positiv mit kultureller Positivität korreliert. Diese Annahme baut auf dem konzeptuellen Zusammenhang der beiden Konstrukte auf Individualniveau auf (z. B. Costa & McCrae, 1980; Diener & Lucas, 1999; Watson & Clark, 1992). Die enge Übereinstimmung der Konstrukte auf Individualniveau führt in dieser Studie zu

Hypothese 2:

Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate positively with cross-national differences in extraversion.

Im Anschluss an die Untersuchung der konvergenten Validität von kultureller Positivität wird der Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität auf Nationalniveau und

nationalen Unterschieden in der Arbeitszufriedenheit betrachtet. Bisherige Studien haben einen konsistent positiven Zusammenhang zwischen kultureller Positivität auf Nationalniveau und nationalen Unterschieden in Lebenszufriedenheitswerten gefunden (Diener et al., 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002). Studien zu dem Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität und nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit blieben bislang aus. Jedoch lassen gefundene, konsistent positive Beziehungen von positiver Affektivität und Arbeitszufriedenheit auf Individualniveau (z. B. Agho, Mueller & Price, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; De Loach, 2003) einen äquivalenten Zusammenhang auf nationalem Level vermuten:

Hypothese 3: *Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate positively with overall job satisfaction.*

Um die Robustheit des angenommenen Zusammenhangs über verschiedene Stichproben hinweg zu beurteilen, werden zusätzlich zu den Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten aus vorliegenden Daten nationale Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte aus früheren Studien herangezogen.

In einem weiteren Schritt soll der inkrementelle Aufklärungsbeitrag von kultureller Positivität an der Varianz nationaler Unterschiede in der Arbeitszufriedenheit unter Beachtung potenzieller konfundierender Variablen, wie nationalen Unterschieden in dem Entwicklungsstand der Nationen, den Arbeitsbedingungen und der Zustimmungstendenz, untersucht werden. Besondere Beachtung findet hierbei das Konzept der Zustimmungstendenz. In früheren Studien wurden systematische kulturelle Unterschiede im Antwortverhalten (z. B. in der Zustimmungstendenz) gefunden, wodurch die Interpretation der gefundenen kulturellen Unterschiede interessierender Variablen erschwert wurde (z. B. Hui, C. H. & Triandis, 1989; Johnson, T., Kulesa, Cho & Shavitt, 2005). Dies ist nach Diener und Kollegen (2000) besonders dann der Fall, wenn interessierende Variablen mit einer direkten Messung erfasst wurden (z. B. durch Befragungen). Diener und Kollegen (2000) nahmen jedoch an, dass kulturelle Positivität unabhängig von kulturellen Unterschieden in der Zustimmungstendenz ist. Denn nach Annahme der Autoren sollte die Zustimmungstendenz globale und spezifische Urteile gleichermaßen beeinflussen, und damit sollten die von den Autoren indirekt erhobenen Positivitätswerte, ermittelt als Residuum zwischen globalen und spezifischen Urteilen, unabhängig von Effekten der Zustimmungstendenz sein.

Um kulturelle Positivität konzeptuell von der Zustimmungstendenz abzugrenzen sowie den Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität und nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit unter Kontrolle der Zustimmungstendenz zu untersuchen, wird in der Studie **Hypothese 4** formuliert:

Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate with overall job satisfaction ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in acquiescent response sets.

Zur Untersuchung der Annahmen werden Korrelations- und hierarchische Regressionsanalysen herangezogen. Grundlage der eigens berechneten Positivitätswerte sind Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte aus Mitarbeiterbefragungen der Jahre 1998-2005 aus insgesamt sechs großen multinationalen Unternehmen. Insgesamt sind Daten aus 41 Ländern von 55.006 Mitarbeitern verfügbar. Darüber hinaus werden wie bereits erwähnt die Positivitätsmaße von Diener und Kollegen (2000) sowie von Suh und Oishi (2002) herangezogen. Zusätzlich wird ein aus allen drei Maßen aggregierter Positivitäts-Index berechnet. Aus einer von der ersten Stichprobe unabhängigen Strichprobe, bestehend aus Mitarbeitern von drei multinationalen Organisationen, werden Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte verwendet, um pro untersuchte Nation einen mittleren Arbeitszufriedenheitswert zu berechnen. Grundlage sind Mitarbeiterbefragungen aus den Jahren 2005 und 2006. Insgesamt sind Daten von 85.352 Mitarbeitern aus 47 Nationen verfügbar.

Die Ergebnisse der Studie zeigen, dass die Annahme einer positiven Korrelationen zwischen den verschiedenen Positivitätsmaßen (Hypothese 1) als auch zwischen den Positivitätsmaßen und Extraversion (Hypothese 2) bestätigt werden kann. Auch der angenommene positive Zusammenhang zwischen verschiedenen Arbeitszufriedenheits- und Positivitätsmaßen (Hypothese 3) kann größtenteils bestätigt werden. Dabei korrelieren die eigens ermittelten Positivitätswerte mit allen untersuchten Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten signifikant ($r = .52$, $p < .01$, $N = 34$ mit Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten aus einer zweiten unabhängigen Stichprobe; $r = .57$, $p < .05$, $N = 16$ mit Werten von C. Liu und Kollegen (2004); $r = .42$, $p < .05$, $N = 26$ mit Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten von Oishi und Kollegen (1999) berichtet; $r = .55$, $p < .05$, $N = 16$ mit Werten berichtet von Hatrup und Kollegen (2008)). Insgesamt sind alle Korrelationen positiv und größtenteils substantiell. Die fehlende Signifikanz bei einigen Korrelationen kann möglicherweise der geringen Länderstichprobe zugeschrieben werden, die in diese Korrelationen einging.

Die Ergebnisse zu Hypothese 4 bestätigen die Annahme, dass kulturelle Positivität, berechnet als aggregierter Index aus den drei untersuchten Positivitätsmaßen, unter Kontrolle der Zustimmungstendenz weiterhin einen positiven Zusammenhang mit nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit aufweist. Die Ergebnisse zeigen zudem, dass kulturelle Positivität unter Kontrolle mehrerer Einflussfaktoren, wie der nationalen Entwicklung, der wahrgenommenen Arbeitsbedingungen und der Zustimmungstendenz, einen konsistent positiven und signifikanten Zusammenhang sowohl zu den eigenen Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten als auch zu den Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten aus früheren Studien aufweist (β 's reichen von .44 bis .68, p 's reichen von $< .001$ bis $< .05$). Die Zustimmungstendenz zeigt unter Kontrolle der anderen untersuchten Variablen mit keinem dieser untersuchten Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte einen signifikanten Zusammenhang.

Insgesamt weisen die Ergebnisse auf die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität im Einfluss auf nationale Unterschiede in Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten hin. Umso bedeutsamer ist das Ergebnis, dass dieser Einfluss signifikant bleibt, auch unter Kontrolle anderer potenzieller Erklärungsfaktoren. Die Ergebnisse unterstützen das neue Forschungsbestreben, neben kulturellen Wertedimensionen, alternative kulturelle Erklärungsvariablen für nationale Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen, insbesondere die Beziehung zwischen Affekt und Kultur, heranzuziehen.

Um die Bedeutung kultureller Affektivität in dem übergreifenden Feld der interkulturellen Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie zu erforschen, ist die Untersuchung des Einflusses von kultureller Affektivität auf weitere wichtige organisationale Einstellungen vonnöten. Diesen Fragestellungen wird deshalb in den verbleibenden zwei Studien nachgegangen. In der folgenden Studie wird die Bedeutung des Einflusses von kultureller Affektivität für nationale Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen außerhalb des Unternehmens untersucht. Hierbei liegt der Fokus auf Kundenzufriedenheits- und -loyalitätsurteilen im Business-to-Business-Kontext eines internationalen Unternehmens.

3.2 Die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität zur Erklärung von Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität

Hausmann, N., Mueller, K., Hatstrup, K. & Straatmann, T. (2011). *Cross-national generalizability of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty*. Unpublished manuscript, University of Mannheim.

Wie durch frühere Studien ersichtlich (s. Abschnitt 2.2.2), existiert bislang wenig Forschung zu nationalen Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität, die über die Untersuchung der interkulturellen Messäquivalenz und über die Untersuchung der Fragestellung an Zwei-Länder-Studien hinaus geht. Studien, die kulturelle Einflüsse auf nationale Unterschiede in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität untersuchten, konnten ein paar Zusammenhänge mit klassischen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) zeigen (z. B. Crotts & Erdmann, 2000; Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Espinoza, 1999; Furrer, Liu & Sudharshan, 2000). Eine detailliertere Untersuchung kultureller Einflüsse auf Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität, im Sinne einer Betrachtung weiterer kultureller Einflussvariablen, steht bislang aus. Ziel dieser Studie ist es daher, den Einfluss kultureller Affektivität auf nationale Unterschiede in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität zu untersuchen. Weiterhin soll diese Studie zusätzliche Hinweise zum Erklärungspotenzial von kultureller Affektivität im Rahmen der übergreifenden internationalen Forschung zu organisationalen Einstellungen liefern.

Deshalb wird in dieser Studie der Zusammenhang von kultureller Affektivität, ebenfalls operationalisiert durch kulturelle Positivität, mit nationalen Unterschieden in der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität untersucht. Konsistent positive Beziehungen von positiver Affektivität und Kundenzufriedenheitswerten auf Individualniveau (z. B. Mooradian & Oliver, 1997; Szymanski & Henard, 2001) lassen einen ähnlichen Zusammenhang auf Nationalniveau vermuten. **Hypothese 1** dieser Studie lautet dementsprechend:

National differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty associate positively with cross-national differences in cultural positivity.

Weiterhin wird in dieser Studie untersucht, ob kulturelle Positivität einen größeren Einfluss auf nationale Unterschiede in abstrakteren Einstellungsurteilen wie Kundenloyalität hat, als auf nationale Unterschiede in konkreteren Einstellungsurteilen wie

Kundenzufriedenheit. Diese Annahme geht auf das Judgment Model of Subjective Well-Being von Schwarz und Strack (1999) zurück, welches besagt, dass bei globaleren, abstrakteren Urteilen eher Heuristiken wie die aktuelle Stimmung oder der aktuelle Affekt zum Wirken kommen, wohingegen spezifischere, konkretere Urteile aufgrund vorliegender, das Urteil betreffender, Informationen getätigt werden. Bezogen auf Kundenzufriedenheit und Kundenloyalität sind Zufriedenheitsurteile konkreter und spezifischer als Kundenloyalitätsurteile. Kundenzufriedenheitsurteile beruhen gewöhnlicherweise auf einem Set an spezifischen Dimensionen (z. B. Parasuraman, Zeithaml & Berry, 1985; 1988) und hängen von der Erinnerung an eine bestimmte Kauf- oder Konsumerfahrung ab. Im Gegensatz dazu spiegelt Kundenloyalität eine globalere, eher hypothetische Bewertung einer in der Zukunft liegenden Wiederkaufsintention wieder, der Intention, das Produkt oder den Service weiterzuempfehlen, sowie eine Produkt- oder Unternehmensidentifikation (z. B. Bei & Chiao, 2006). Somit wird in der vorliegenden Studie folgende Hypothese angenommen:

Hypothese 2: *Cultural positivity shows a stronger positive relationship with customer loyalty than with customer satisfaction.*

Wie auch in Studie 1 soll in dieser Studie kulturelle Positivität konzeptuell von Zustimmungstendenz abgegrenzt werden. Deshalb soll der Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität und nationaler Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität unter Kontrolle der Zustimmungstendenz untersucht werden. **Hypothese 3** lautet daher:

Cross-national differences in cultural positivity relate positively with overall customer satisfaction and customer loyalty ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in acquiescent response style.

Da kulturelle Unterschiede in Antwortstilen nicht die einzigen Alternativerklärungen von nationalen Unterschieden in Kundeneinstellungen sind, werden zudem auch objektive Bedingungen in den untersuchten Nationen als potenzieller Ursprung nationaler Unterschiede in Kundeneinstellungen untersucht. In diesem Zusammenhang werden die Variablen ökonomischer Frieden und Wettbewerbsfähigkeit in die Analysen aufgenommen, da M. D. Johnson, Herrmann und Gustafsson (2002) eine höhere Kundenzufriedenheit in Ländern mit hoch ausgeprägtem ökonomischem Frieden und stärkerer Wettbewerbsfähigkeit beobachten konnten. Die Hypothese dazu lautet:

Hypothese 4: *Cross-national differences in cultural positivity relate positively with overall customer satisfaction and customer loyalty ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in relevant contextual variables such as economic freedom and competitiveness.*

Zur Analyse dieser Fragestellungen werden Daten aus einer Kundenzufriedenheitsbefragung eines großen internationalen Unternehmens im Business-to-Business-Kontext herangezogen. Daten aus insgesamt 36 Ländern von insgesamt 14.916 Kunden fließen in die Untersuchung ein. Diese Daten auf Individualniveau werden zu einem mittleren Kundenzufriedenheits- und -loyalitätswert pro untersuchte Nation aggregiert. Zur Messung der kulturellen Positivität auf Nationalniveau wird ein aus verschiedenen Positivitätsmaßen kombinierter Gesamt-Index verwendet, der aus Studie 1 stammt.

In einem ersten Schritt wird die Messäquivalenz der Kundenzufriedenheits- und -loyalitätskalen über die untersuchten Nationen hinweg getestet. Zur Testung der Messäquivalenz wird eine Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis (MGCFA) nach Vandenberg und Lance (2000) durchgeführt. Um den Fit des Gesamtmodells zu bestimmen werden der Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Incremental Fit Index (IFI) und Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) ermittelt. Werte größer oder gleich .90 für CFI und IFI sowie Werte kleiner oder gleich .08 für den RMSEA können als Bestätigung eines adäquaten Fits interpretiert werden (z. B. Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Ein sehr guter Fit eines gemeinsamen Kundenzufriedenheits-Loyalitäts-Modells (CFI = .96, RMSEA = .01) bestätigt konfigurale Äquivalenz. Weiterhin kann metrische Äquivalenz bestätigt werden. Die Skalen zur Messung der Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität zeigen eine akzeptable psychometrische Äquivalenz zwischen Nationen. Dies erlaubt die Testung der Hypothesen dieser Studie mit den beobachteten Skalenwerten.

Die Korrelationsanalysen zu Hypothese 1 unterstützen die Annahme für Kundenloyalität, nicht aber für Kundenzufriedenheit. Kundenloyalität korreliert signifikant positiv mit kultureller Positivität auf Nationalniveau ($r = .50$, $p < .01$, $N = 35$), nicht aber Kundenzufriedenheit ($r = .20$, $p > .05$, $N = 35$). Ein Signifikanztest zwischen den beiden Korrelationen bestätigt Hypothese 2. Die Korrelation zwischen Kundenloyalität und kultureller Positivität ist signifikant größer als die Korrelation zwischen Kundenzufriedenheit und kultureller Positivität ($Z = 3.00$, $p < .01$).

Zur Testung der Hypothesen 3 und 4 werden hierarchische Regressionen durchgeführt. In keinem Schritt der hierarchischen Regression zeigt eine der aufgenommenen Erklärungsvariablen einen signifikanten Aufklärungsbeitrag der Varianz von nationaler Kundenzufriedenheit. Im Gegensatz dazu zeigt kulturelle Positivität auf Nationalniveau einen stark signifikanten Zusammenhang zu nationaler Kundenloyalität, auch unter Kontrolle der anderen potenziellen Erklärungsfaktoren ($\beta = .51, p < .01$). Weder die ökonomischen Kontrollvariablen noch Zustimmungstendenz leisten einen signifikanten Aufklärungsbeitrag an der Varianz von nationaler Kundenloyalität. Diese Ergebnisse unterstützen sowohl Hypothese 3 als auch Hypothese 4.

Insgesamt unterstützen die Ergebnisse die Befunde der ersten Studie und weisen ebenfalls auf die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität für die Erklärung von nationalen Unterschieden in organisationalen Einstellungen hin. Im Speziellen verdeutlicht die Studie die vielversprechende Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität als Erklärungsfaktor für nationale Unterschiede in der Kundenloyalität. Weiterhin weisen die Ergebnisse der Studie auf die unterschiedliche Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität als potenzielle Erklärung nationaler Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen hin - spezifischere, konkrete Einstellungsurteile scheinen demnach schwächer durch Affektivität beeinflusst zu sein, als abstraktere, globale Einstellungsurteile.

Zur weiteren Verdeutlichung der Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität in dem übergreifenden Feld der interkulturellen Arbeits- und Organisationspsychologie, soll abschließend die Beziehung von kultureller Affektivität und affektivem organisationalem Commitment untersucht werden. Um ein umfassenderes Verständnis des Einflusses von kultureller Affektivität auf organisationale Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext zu erhalten, wird Affekt in der folgenden Studie zusätzlich zu kultureller Positivität über ein weiteres affektbezogenes Konstrukt, der Lebenszufriedenheit, operationalisiert. Des Weiteren wird neben affektiven Einflüssen auch der Einfluss der kulturellen Wertedimension Individualismus/Kollektivismus von Hofstede (1980) untersucht, mit dem Ziel, die in der Forschung wahrgenommene Abwendung von klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen als Erklärungsfaktoren nationaler Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen und die Zuwendung zu Einflüssen von kulturellem Affekt empirisch zu untermauern.

3.3 Die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität zur Erklärung von Unterschieden im affektiven organisationalen Commitment: eine zusammenfassende Perspektive

Hausmann, N., Mueller, K., Hattrup, K. & Spiess, S.-O. (2013). An investigation of the relationships between affective organizational commitment and national differences in positivity and life satisfaction. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 62(2), 260-285.

Wie bereits in Abschnitt 2.2.3 aufgeführt, existieren trotz eines großen Interesses in der interkulturellen Forschung an dem Konstrukt des affektiven organisationalen Commitments (z. B. Morrow, 1993) bislang wenige Studien zur Untersuchung nationaler Unterschiede in der Höhe des affektiven Commitments. Bei einem Großteil dieser Studien handelt es sich um rein deskriptive Untersuchungen von nationalen Unterschieden in der Höhe des affektiven Commitments. Bislang existiert nur eine sehr geringe Anzahl an Studien, welche die Beziehung von kulturellen Variablen und affektivem organisationalem Commitment beachtet hat. Diese Studien wurden stark durch die klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen von Hofstede (1980) beeinflusst. Studien mit Fokus auf die Dimension Individualismus/Kollektivismus finden sich hierbei am Häufigsten. Problematisch an einem Großteil der Studien ist die geringe Anzahl an Nationen, welche den Untersuchungen zugrunde gelegt wurde. Zusammenfassend zeigten die Ergebnisse der größer angelegten Studien keine Unterstützung bezüglich einer systematischen Beziehung zwischen nationalen Unterschieden in der Höhe des affektiven Commitments und Individualismus/Kollektivismus.

Die vorliegende Studie nimmt sich deshalb zum Ziel, den starken Fokus auf klassische kulturelle Wertedimensionen zu überwinden und die Bedeutsamkeit von nationalen Unterschieden in kultureller Affektivität im Einfluss auf affektives organisationales Commitment zu untersuchen. Weiterhin soll diese Studie, über die ersten zwei Studien hinaus, zusätzliche Hinweise zum Erklärungspotenzial von Affekt im Rahmen der übergreifenden internationalen Forschung zu organisationalen Einstellungen liefern.

In der bisherigen Forschung zu affektiven Einflüssen auf nationale Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen finden Gelade und Kollegen (2006) einen Zusammenhang auf nationalem Level von affektivem Commitment und Happiness, der den Zusammenhang

von affektivem Commitment mit sozioökonomischen Variablen und klassischen kulturellen Wertedimensionen übertrifft. Happiness ist ein Synonym für Lebenszufriedenheit (Veenhoven, 1991) und ist konzeptualisiert als Konstrukt bestehend aus Affekt und Kognition (Veenhoven, 1996).

Die vorliegende Studie baut auf den Untersuchungen von Gelade und Kollegen (2006) auf und ermittelt, zusätzlich zu dem Zusammenhang von affektivem Commitment mit nationalen Unterschieden in der Lebenszufriedenheit, den Zusammenhang von affektivem Commitment mit nationalen Unterschieden in kultureller Positivität. Kulturelle Positivität ist konzeptualisiert als reinere affektive Variable im Vergleich zu Lebenszufriedenheit. Mit zusätzlichem Augenmerk auf diese Variable soll die Bedeutung von nationalen Unterschieden in affektiven Einflüssen für Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext umfassender untersucht werden.

Zudem wird in der folgenden Studie die Mehrebenenstruktur der Daten adäquat über Hierarchisch Lineare Modellierung nach Hofman und Gavin (1998) untersucht. Der Großteil der vorgestellten Forschung unter Abschnitt 2.2 untersuchte Zusammenhänge von kulturellen Einflussfaktoren und organisationalen Einstellungen hingegen nur auf einem Analyselevel. Organisationale Einstellungen wurden über Individuen zu Länderwerten aggregiert, welche sodann überwiegend mit Variablen, erhoben auf nationaler Ebene, in Beziehung gesetzt wurden. Nach Tsui, Nifadkar und Ou (2007) ist dies bei dem Großteil der Studien zur Untersuchung interkulturellen organisationalen Verhaltens der Fall. Nach ihnen ist dies „truly surprising, given the cross-level nature of the phenomenon, which by definition involves the integration of a macro characteristic (national culture) with micro processes (individual and group behavior at work)” (Tsui et al., 2007, S. 39). Anders formuliert bedeutet dies, dass das theoretische Interesse in Studien, wie auch in dieser, oft darin besteht, ob eine Variable auf Nationalniveau die Varianz zwischen Individuen in einem Konstrukt vorhersagt.

Die **Hypothesen** der Studie lauten dementsprechend:

Hypothese 1: *Nation-level life satisfaction is positively associated with individual affective organisational commitment.*

Hypothese 2: *Nation-level cultural positivity is positively associated with individual*

affective organisational commitment.

Zusätzlich werden wichtige alternative Erklärungen für das angenommene Zusammenhangsmuster, sowohl auf individuellem als auch auf nationalem Analyselevel, untersucht. Arbeitszufriedenheit und Tätigkeitsbereich, beziehungsweise die Zuteilung der auszuführenden Arbeit in Verwaltung, Produktion und Management, wird auf Individualebene kontrolliert. Die vier kulturellen Wertedimensionen Machtdistanz, Unsicherheitsvermeidung, Individualismus/Kollektivismus und Maskulinität/Femininität werden auf nationaler Ebene kontrolliert, sowie Zustimmungstendenz und nationale Entwicklung.

Zur Untersuchung der Fragestellung werden Commitment-Daten einer Mitarbeiterbefragung in einer multinationalen Organisation aus dem Jahr 2008 herangezogen. Insgesamt fließen Daten aus 30 Ländern von 93.055 Mitarbeitern in die Untersuchung ein. Zur Messung von nationaler Lebenszufriedenheit werden Daten aus der World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010) auf Länderebene herangezogen. Kulturelle Positivität auf Nationalniveau wird durch Aggregation von verwendeten Positivitätsmaßen in Studie 1 zu einem Gesamt-Index ermittelt.

Um die Konstruktvalidität und Messäquivalenz der Skalen zu affektivem organisationalem Commitment sowie zu Arbeitszufriedenheit zwischen Nationen zu testen, wird eine Multigroup Confirmatory Factor Analysis nach Vandenberg und Lance (2000) durchgeführt. Zur Testung der Messäquivalenz wird der Fit eines gemeinsamen Commitment-Arbeitszufriedenheits-Modells in jedem Land getestet. Konfigurale Äquivalenz des Grundmodells kann bestätigt werden ($CFI = .94$, $RMSEA = .01$). Auch die metrische Äquivalenz der Messinstrumente für affektives Commitment und Arbeitszufriedenheit kann bestätigt werden. Somit liefern die Skalen zur Messung von affektivem Commitment und Arbeitszufriedenheit akzeptable psychometrische Äquivalenz zwischen den Ländern, was eine Testung der Hypothesen dieser Studie durch Nutzung dieser Skalen erlaubt.

Die Ergebnisse bestätigen beide Hypothesen. Unter Beachtung aller potenziellen Erklärungsvariablen, erweisen sich sowohl kulturelle Positivität als auch Lebenszufriedenheit auf nationalem Level als signifikante Prädiktoren von affektivem Commitment. Insgesamt erklären beide Konstrukte 17%-Punkte der Landeslevel-Varianz

von affektivem Commitment, unter Kontrolle aller potenziellen Störvariablen. Dieser inkrementelle Effekt der affektiven Variablen ist zudem größer als der Beitrag der gemeinsam untersuchten Kontrollvariablen auf nationaler Ebene (nationale Entwicklung, kulturelle Wertedimensionen und Zustimmungstendenz). Darüber hinaus zeigt sich, dass kulturelle Positivität, als reinere Messung von Affekt verglichen mit Lebenszufriedenheit, unabhängige Effekte auf affektives Commitment aufweist.

Insgesamt weisen diese Ergebnisse ebenfalls auf die Bedeutung kultureller Affektivität im Rahmen internationaler Forschung zu organisationalen Einstellungen hin. Darüber hinaus kann belegt werden, dass sich die Effekte von reinem Affekt, operationalisiert durch kulturelle Positivität, von Effekten der Lebenszufriedenheit, als Konstrukt bestehend aus einer affektiven und kognitiven Komponente, abgrenzen lassen. Außerdem liefern die Ergebnisse einen empirischen Befund dazu, dass nationale Unterschiede im Affekt, im Gegensatz zu nationalen Unterschieden in der klassischen kulturellen Wertedimension Individualismus/Kollektivismus (Hofstede, 1980), einen systematischen Zusammenhang mit organisationalen Einstellungen aufweisen. Auch durch diese dritte Studie wird das neue Forschungsbestreben unterstützt, alternativ zu kulturellen Wertedimensionen, andere kulturelle Erklärungsvariablen, insbesondere die Beziehung zwischen Affekt und Kultur, heranzuziehen.

4. Schlussfolgerung und Ausblick

Um in internationalen Unternehmen ein zentral gesteuertes Human Resource Management über Ländergrenzen hinweg, sowie eine zentrale Abstimmung von Marketingstrategien auf lokale Kundenbedürfnisse trotz geographischer Entfernungen zu etablieren, kommt dem Survey-Feedback eine wichtige Rolle zu. Hierbei ist die Frage nach der internationalen Generalisierbarkeit von Befragungsergebnissen von großer Bedeutung. Eine Berücksichtigung des Einflusses kultureller Variablen ist hierbei essentiell, damit die erhaltenen Informationen nicht zu falschen Schlussfolgerungen und somit zu falschen zentralen und dezentralen Entscheidungen führen (z. B. Ryan et al., 1999). Hier setzten die drei Studien der vorliegenden Arbeit an und hoben die wichtige Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität zur Erklärung organisationaler Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext hervor. Insbesondere im Vergleich zu früheren Studien mit Fokus auf kulturelle Erklärungsgrößen, zeigte sich Affekt als bedeutsame kulturelle Einflussvariable. In früheren Studien wurden fast ausschließlich klassische kulturelle Wertedimensionen wie Individualismus/Kollektivismus (Hofstede, 1980) als kulturelle Erklärungsfaktoren nationaler Unterschiede in organisationalen Einstellungen heran gezogen, jedoch konnte oft kein systematischer Zusammenhang zwischen diesen Wertedimensionen und Einstellungskonstrukten auf Nationalniveau gefunden werden. Die Studien der vorliegenden Arbeit gingen somit erfolgreich über die „IC [Individualism/Collectivism] obsession“ (Gelfand et al., 2007, S. 496) hinaus, in dem das wachsende Interesse an der Beziehung zwischen Affekt und Kultur (z. B. Gelade et al., 2006) aufgegriffen wurde und kulturelle Positivität und Lebenszufriedenheit auf Nationalniveau als Erklärungsfaktoren von organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext identifiziert werden konnten. Folglich bedarf es insbesondere in internationalen Unternehmen ein klares Verständnis über affektive Einflüsse auf die Ausprägung organisationaler Einstellungen.

4.1 Theoretische und praktische Implikationen

Die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden drei Studien unterstützen die Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität in der internationalen Einstellungsforschung, unabhängig von anderen konfundierenden Effekten auf National- (s. Studie 1-3) und Individualniveau (s. Studie 3). Zusätzlich weisen die Ergebnisse von Studie 2 auf eine unterschiedliche Bedeutung von kultureller Affektivität als potenzielle Erklärung nationaler Unterschiede in

organisationalen Einstellungen hin - spezifischere, konkrete Einstellungsurteile scheinen demnach schwächer durch Affektivität beeinflusst zu sein, als abstraktere, globale Einstellungsurteile. Darüber hinaus wurde in Studie 3 gezeigt, dass sich die Effekte von reinem Affekt, operationalisiert durch kulturelle Positivität, von Effekten der Lebenszufriedenheit, als Konstrukt bestehend aus einer affektiven und kognitiven Komponente, abgrenzen lassen. Insgesamt liefern die Ergebnisse dieser Arbeit eine Unterstützung der Annahme, dass affektive Unterschiede zwischen Ländern wichtige strukturelle Zusammenhänge mit organisationalen Einstellungen haben können. Aus theoretischer Sicht weisen die Ergebnisse der Studien auf einen bedeutsamen kulturellen Unterschied hin, der Wahrnehmungen, Erinnerungen und Bewertungen, sowie die Beurteilung spezifischer und globaler Arbeitseigenschaften beeinflussen kann. Die Ergebnisse haben in vielerlei Hinsicht Ähnlichkeiten zu Studien auf individueller Ebene, die zeigen, dass positive Dispositionen, wie Enthusiasmus, Interesse und Begeisterung, oft zusammen auftreten (z. B. Watson, 1988). Die vorliegenden Studien zeigen jedoch die besondere Bedeutung kultureller Unterschiede auf nationaler Ebene für die Bildung organisationaler Einstellungen. Aus theoretischer Perspektive bedarf es darüber hinaus der Untersuchung möglicher Ursachen von affektiven Unterschieden zwischen Ländern sowie von Implikationen dieser Unterschiede, um intra- und internationale Variationen organisationalen Verhaltens besser zu verstehen.

Für die betriebliche Praxis untermauern die Ergebnisse die Notwendigkeit kulturelle Unterschiede in der Affektivität bei einem Vergleich organisationaler Einstellungen zwischen Ländern zu beachten. Die Ergebnisse von Studie 2 deuten darauf hin, dass dies insbesondere für globale, zukunftsorientierte Konstrukte relevant sein kann. Der starke Zusammenhang von kultureller Positivität mit nationaler Arbeitszufriedenheit in Studie 1 lässt sich möglicherweise dadurch erklären, dass sich Arbeitszufriedenheitswerte im Gegensatz zu Kundenzufriedenheitswerten auf eine Vielzahl an Arbeitserfahrungen und -facetten beziehen, was die Nutzung von Heuristiken im Urteilsprozess wiederum wahrscheinlicher macht. Möglicherweise sind gegensätzlich zu Arbeitszufriedenheitswerten weniger und spezifischere Erfahrungen innerhalb einer kürzeren Zeit fundamental für Kundenzufriedenheitsurteile und machen die Anwendung von Heuristiken und somit den Einfluss von kultureller Positivität unwahrscheinlicher. Für die betriebliche Praxis verdeutlicht dies, dass es bei einer Vernachlässigung des Einflusses affektiver Variablen zu fehlerhaften Schlussfolgerungen bei einem Vergleich von organisationalen Einstellungen

über Länder hinweg kommen kann - mit Einschränkungen bzgl. der Kundenzufriedenheit -, da die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass organisationale Einstellungen auch interkulturelle Unterschiede in affektiven Konstrukten reflektieren. Aus diesem Grund sollten nationale Unterschiede in affektiven Einflüssen in der betrieblichen Praxis statistisch kontrolliert werden, bevor ein Vergleich von organisationalen Einstellungen über Länder hinweg vorgenommen wird. Eine Nichtbeachtung affektiver Einflüsse würde nach den Befunden der vorliegenden Studien beispielsweise dazu führen, dass der Unterschied zwischen niedrigeren Werten in organisationalen Einstellungen von Mitarbeitern aus Niederlassungen in Ländern mit niedrigerer Positivität wie China, Malaysia, Korea oder Japan, verglichen mit Ländern mit höherer Positivität wie die Schweiz oder Schweden, als alleiniger Unterschied zwischen organisationalen Einstellungen fehlinterpretiert wird. Tatsächlich wäre jedoch ein bedeutsamer Anteil der Varianz durch kulturelle Unterschiede in einer stabilen Affektivität innerhalb der Länder zu erklären. Eine Möglichkeit, mit nationalen Unterschieden in kultureller Affektivität bei der Interpretation von organisationalen Einstellungen umzugehen, ist der Vergleich von Einstellungsurteilen innerhalb eines Landes. So können Organisationen beispielsweise Einstellungsurteile mit Benchmarkdaten aus derselben Nation vergleichen. Dies liefert vermutlich bessere diagnostische Informationen als ein Vergleich von Niederlassungen innerhalb einer Organisation über Länder hinweg.

Die Ergebnisse der vorliegenden Arbeit haben zudem praktische Relevanz im Rahmen der Anpassung und Leitung von Delegierten. Kulturelle Sozialisationsmuster führen zu stabilen Unterschieden in der Affektivität, die mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit fast ein Leben lang anhalten. Dies bedeutet, dass Delegierte mit einer gewissen Wahrscheinlichkeit einige Werte, Einstellungen und Perspektiven aus ihrem Heimatland beibehalten. Kulturelle Unterschiede in der Affektivität können deshalb bei der Interpretation ausgedrückter Einstellungen von Delegierten eine bedeutsame Rolle spielen. So könnten zum Beispiel niedrigere Arbeitszufriedenheits- und Commitment-Werte von Delegierten aus Nationen mit einem niedrigeren Ausmaß an kultureller Positivität berichtet werden. Auf der anderen Seite könnten Führungskräfte aus Kulturen mit höherer Positivität größere Erwartungen bzgl. des ausgedrückten Affektes, der angegebenen Arbeitszufriedenheit oder des berichteten Commitments ihrer Mitarbeiter haben, als Führungskräfte aus Kulturen mit niedrigerer Positivität.

4.2 Einschränkungen der Studien

Die wohl bedeutsamste Einschränkung der Studien der vorliegenden Arbeit liegt in der Betrachtung nationaler Unterschiede mit dem Ziel der Untersuchung des Effektes kultureller Einflussfaktoren. Wie bereits zu Beginn von Abschnitt 3 erwähnt, werden nach Georgas und Kollegen (2004) in der Literatur gewöhnlicherweise nationale Grenzen zur Operationalisierung von Kultur verwendet. Hofstede und Peterson (2000) machen zudem darauf aufmerksam, dass es valide Gründe zu der Annahme gibt, dass in einer Vielzahl kultureller Dimensionen und Muster wichtige Unterschiede zwischen Nationen existieren. Nichtsdestotrotz könnte sich die Variation von affektiven Konstrukten innerhalb einer Nation als ebenso wichtig herausstellen wie eine Variation zwischen Nationen.

Eine recht bedeutsame Einschränkung von Studie 2 ist die begrenzte Anzahl an früherer Forschung zur internationalen Generalisierbarkeit von Kundenzufriedenheit und -loyalität, auf der die Studie aufbaut. Deshalb kann diese Studie als erste Untersuchung ausgewählter Kernvariablen betrachtet werden, von denen angenommen wird, dass diese Unterschiede in Kundeneinstellungen auf Nationalniveau erklären können.

Eine weitere bedeutsame Einschränkung der Studien in der vorliegenden Arbeit liegt in der Verwendung des sogenannten Etic-Ansatzes (Berry, Poortinga, Segall & Dasen, 1992; Brett et al., 1997; Triandis, 1994). Hierbei wird ein über alle untersuchten Länderstichproben gleich strukturiertes Survey-Feedback-Instrument verwendet. Das bedeutet im Speziellen, dass bestimmte Facetten der interessierenden organisationalen Einstellungen bereits vor der Datenerhebung als konstituierende Dimensionen des Messinstruments definiert werden. Im Gegensatz dazu wird bei dem sogenannten Emic-Ansatz angenommen, dass es in verschiedenen Kulturen auch noch andere relevante Facetten der organisationalen Einstellungen geben kann, die durch ein einheitlich konzipiertes Survey-Feedback-Instrument nicht erfasst werden (Berry et al., 1992; Brett et al., 1997; Triandis, 1994). Der Emic-Ansatz stellt somit ein im Vergleich zum Etic-Ansatz qualitativeres Vorgehen dar, indem beispielsweise unterschiedliche, in den jeweiligen Ländern entwickelte, Instrumente zur Erhebung der Daten verwendet werden (Berry et al., 1992; Brett et al., 1997; Triandis, 1994). Eine qualitative Datenerfassung stellt sich in der internationalen Forschung als besonders schwierig dar. Aus diesem Grund ist ein Verfolgen des Etic-Ansatzes eine gewöhnliche Einschränkung in multinationalen Studien. Nichtsdestotrotz wurde in den Studien der vorliegenden Arbeit eine Reihe an wichtigen und replizierbaren Unterschieden

zwischen Nationen beobachtet, welche in ähnlicher Weise von anderen Forschern durch die Nutzung einheitlicher Survey-Feedback-Instrumente über verschiedene Länderstichproben hinweg beobachtet werden konnten (z. B. Hofstede, 1980).

4.3 Ausblick auf zukünftige Forschungsfragen

Obwohl die vorliegende Arbeit neue Erkenntnisse bzgl. des Zusammenhangs von kultureller Affektivität und organisationalen Einstellungen im internationalen Kontext liefert, bleiben weitere interessante Fragen unbeantwortet und sollten in der zukünftigen Forschung Beachtung finden.

So bedarf es zukünftiger Forschung bzgl. konzeptueller und empirischer Ähnlichkeiten und Unterschiede zwischen weiteren affektiven Variablen über verschiedene Länder hinweg.

Darüber hinaus sollte in zukünftigen Studien untersucht werden, inwiefern kulturelle Affektivität Unterschiede in der Ausprägung von weiteren organisationalen Einstellungskonstrukten wie Mitarbeiter-Engagement, Kündigungsabsichten und Organizational Citizenship, aber auch relevanten Einstellungskonstrukten aus der Marktforschung, wie beispielsweise der Einstellung gegenüber verschiedenen Werbekampagnen, erklären können.

Des Weiteren bleibt bislang die Frage unbeantwortet, wie affektive Einflüsse beispielsweise über die Erinnerung, das Erleben oder die Kommunikation auf organisationale Einstellungen wirken. Weiss und Cropanzano (1996) postulieren mit ihrer Affektive Events Theory (AET), dass organisationale Einstellungen, wie zum Beispiel Arbeitszufriedenheit, einerseits durch die Beurteilung von Merkmalen der Arbeitsumgebung beeinflusst werden, aber auch durch affektive Reaktionen, die sowohl durch Arbeitsereignisse als auch durch Persönlichkeitsdispositionen beeinflusst werden. Bislang existiert kaum Forschung im Rahmen der AET mit Fokus auf Arbeitsereignisse sowie dem Zusammenhang von diesen und affektiven Reaktionen moderiert durch Persönlichkeitsdispositionen. Nach Mignonac und Herrbach (2004) ist es jedoch wichtig, ein besseres Verständnis darüber zu entwickeln, welche Ereignisse positive oder negative affektive Reaktionen hervorrufen. Dies sollte durch zukünftige Forschung untersucht werden. Im Speziellen sollte insbesondere der Zusammenhang des Erinnerns, Erlebens und

Kommunizierens von Arbeitsereignissen mit affektiven Reaktionen untersucht werden. Auch der moderierende Effekt von Persönlichkeitsdispositionen ist bislang kaum erforscht (vgl. Werner & Pervin, 1986; Ilies & Judge, 2002) und bedarf weiterer Untersuchung.

Ein weiteres zukünftiges Forschungsfeld liegt in der Untersuchung von affektiven Einflüssen innerhalb eines Landes, zum Beispiel Unterschiede zwischen Individuen, natürlich vorkommenden Gruppen (z. B. Freundeskreise, Familien) und künstlich zusammengeführten Gruppen (z. B. Arbeitsgruppen, Schulklassen).

Insgesamt existiert durch die vorliegenden Studien bereits ein umfassendes Verständnis bzgl. der Bedeutung von Kultur und Affekt auf nationaler Ebene für eine korrekte Interpretation von Unterschieden in organisationalen Einstellungen zwischen Ländern. Bislang fehlt jedoch ausführlichere Forschung zu der Bedeutung kultureller und affektiver Einflüsse auf Länderebene für Unterschiede zwischen Nationen in der Akzeptanz gegenüber Survey-Feedback-Maßnahmen. Weiterhin fehlt bislang Forschung zu der Bedeutung kultureller und affektiver Einflüsse auf Länderebene im Rahmen des Folgeprozesses von Survey-Feedback-Maßnahmen. Im Folgeprozess einer Befragung werden die Ergebnisse mit den Mitarbeitern diskutiert und anschließend Verbesserungsmaßnahmen abgeleitet und umgesetzt (z. B. Borg, 2003). Somit ist diese Phase des Survey-Feedback-Prozesses am wichtigsten für das Ziel von Organisationen, durch Survey-Feedback Organisationsentwicklung anzustoßen (z. B. Bungard et al., 1996). Da insbesondere für internationale Unternehmen Survey-Feedback, im Sinne der Unterstützung für ein einheitliches und zentral gesteuertes Human Resource Management sowie einer zentralen Abstimmung von Marketingstrategien auf lokale Kundenbedürfnisse, relevant ist, kommt der Frage nach kulturellen und affektiven Einflüssen auch im Rahmen des Folgeprozesses eine wichtige Rolle zu. Bisher existiert jedoch keine Forschung zu potenziellen Erklärungsfaktoren nationaler Unterschiede zwischen Nationen in der Bewertung von Folgeprozessen. Um die volle Tragweite der Bedeutung kultureller und affektiver Einflüsse im Rahmen von Survey-Feedback zu verstehen, bedarf es somit weiterführende Forschung zu diesen Einflüssen im Folgeprozess von Survey-Feedback-Maßnahmen.

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Eidesstattliche Erklärung

Ich versichere, dass ich die beiliegende Arbeit ohne Hilfe Dritter und ohne Benutzung anderer als der angegebenen Quellen und Hilfsmittel angefertigt und die den benutzten Quellen wörtlich oder inhaltlich entnommenen Stellen als solche kenntlich gemacht habe. Diese Arbeit hat in gleicher oder ähnlicher Form noch keiner Prüfungsbehörde vorgelegen.

Ort, Datum

Dipl.-Psych. Natascha Hausmann

Erklärung der Koautoren / Co-Authors' Statement

It is hereby confirmed that articles number two and three were primarily conceived and written by Natascha Hausmann, Dipl.-Psych. Article one was primarily conceived and written in close cooperation with the first author Prof. Dr. Karsten Müller. In this article, Natascha Hausmann comprised to a very significant amount of the work.

(1) Mueller, K., Hatstrup, K., & Hausmann, N. (2009). An investigation of cross-national differences in positivity and job satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 82(3), 465-707.

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We sign this statement to the effect that Natascha Hausmann is credited as the primary source of ideas and the main author of articles two and three, and to the effect that she is credited as the primary source of ideas besides the main author Prof. Dr. Karsten Müller of article one.

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Anhang: Kopien der Artikel



An investigation of cross-national differences in positivity and job satisfaction

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The present research examined the role of national differences in positivity as an explanation of cross-national variation in job satisfaction (JS) ratings. National positivity values were derived from a sample of current employees by calculating the mean residual in a regression of global JS on mean facet satisfaction ratings. As predicted, the positivity values derived in the present research showed convergent validity with other indices of nation-level positivity, and national differences in extraversion. National differences in positivity showed significant incremental associations with national differences in JS ratings after controlling for the effects of acquiescence, perceived differences in working conditions, and national development. Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed.

Job satisfaction (JS) is a central concern in organizations, and not surprisingly has been the focus of a great deal of attention in the field of industrial and organizational psychology (Judge, Parker, Colbert, Heller, & Ilies, 2001; Spector, 1997). Due to increasing globalization, an emerging research agenda has sought to address the cross-national generalizability of JS and its correlates (Judge *et al.*, 2001; Liu, Borg, & Spector, 2004; Ryan, Chan, Ployhart, & Slade, 1999; Ryan, Horvath, Ployhart, Schmitt, & Slade, 2000). Such research has the potential to contribute both to our theoretical understanding of job attitudes, and also to the practical concerns relevant to the understanding and management of human resources in multinational firms. However, most of the multinational research on JS has been limited to the investigation of the psychometric equivalence of JS measures across nations (Liu *et al.*, 2004; Ryan *et al.*, 1999, 2000), or simple descriptive differences in mean JS levels across national borders (e.g. Blunt, 1973; De Boer, 1978; Haire, Ghiselli, & Porter, 1966; Oishi, Diener, Lucas, & Suh, 1999). Although establishing cross-national measurement equivalence is an important prerequisite for the meaningful interpretation of observed similarities and differences between cultures, very little research has investigated the relationship between systematic differences in mean JS ratings and important cultural or national variables

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(Judge *et al.*, 2001). Cross-cultural research on JS needs to go beyond the mere examination of measurement equivalence of applied measures, and investigate the role of national and cultural variables as potential explanations for differences in mean levels of JS in different nations.

Recently, a construct has been examined in the domain of life satisfaction and subjective well-being that has considerable potential relevance in explaining cross-national differences in JS. Diener, Scollon, Oishi, Dzokoto, and Suh (2000) define *positivity* as a cultural variable reflecting the tendency of members of a cultural group 'to view life experiences in a rosy light because they value positive affect and a positive view of life' (p. 160). Positivity at the national level of analysis is closely related to positive affectivity (PA) at the individual level of analysis (Watson & Clark, 1992; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988), but is thought to reflect the influences of cultural socialization patterns that increase or decrease the extent to which individuals within a culture experience and report positive affect. Thus, Diener *et al.* (2000) provided national positivity scores for 41 nations using samples of college students. Positivity at the national level correlated significantly with nation-level differences in global life satisfaction, and explained a significant proportion of the variance across nations in overall life satisfaction, after statistically controlling for differences in national wealth.

Given the strong empirical association between job and life satisfaction, and the theoretical underpinnings of both, it seems reasonable to predict an association between national differences in positivity and nation-level differences in JS ratings. This is especially true given that PA at the individual level of analysis has been shown to be one of the most important dispositional variables associated with inter-individual differences in JS in single-nation research (e.g. Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Thoresen, Kaplan, Barsky, Warren, & De Chermont, 2003). Thus, the present research examines whether the relationships observed between stable affective dispositions and JS at the individual level of analysis are observed at the nation level of analysis, using the positivity construct as an explanatory variable predicting international differences in JS ratings.

More specifically, the present research first evaluates the convergent validity of different operationalizations of the nation-level positivity construct, followed by an examination of the relationship between national positivity and cross-national differences in JS ratings. In the sections below, we provide a review and synthesis of previous research on cross-national differences in JS, and research on national positivity within the life satisfaction domain, prior to developing hypotheses about the role of national positivity as a predictor of cross-national differences in JS.

Differences in job satisfaction levels across nations

The examination of a correlation between national culture variables and JS scores focuses on the main effects of culture. According to Brett, Tinsley, Janssens, Barsness, and Lytle (1997), the main effects of culture should only be examined if the hypotheses regarding mean differences between cultures are specified *a priori*, if expected differences are explained through cultural variables and if the hypotheses concerning intercultural differences and commonalities are tested in at least three nations. Otherwise results remain problematic.

A number of studies have examined differences in JS levels across a small number or even only two nations (e.g. England & Negandhi, 1979; Lincoln, 1989; Simonetti & Weitz, 1972; Slocum, 1971; Spector & Wimalasiri, 1986). As Brett *et al.* (1997) point out, differences in the mean levels of a construct between a small number of nations are

difficult to explain in regard to cultural influences due to the variety of potential alternative explanations (e.g. differences in objective conditions, response style, sample differences etc.). Of course, in the field of applied cross-cultural research it is almost impossible to control for all potential alternative explanations (Triandis, 1994), and this threat becomes even more salient when researchers rely on the comparisons of two nations, or a small number of nations. On one hand, the likelihood of a random covariation of national JS scores with cultural variables is lower with an increasing number of data points (nations) constituting the covariation. On the other hand, an increasing number of nations constituting the covariation of cultural variables with national JS levels does additionally decrease the likelihood of an unsystematic incidental covariation of a third variable with the criterion variable of interest, which minimizes the likelihood of a cultural misinterpretation of observed national differences. This assumption presumes however, that the nations examined in the study substantively vary on the cultural variable of interest (Aycan, 2000; Aycan & Kanungo, 2001; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Therefore, if nothing else, conclusions about the relationships between national mean differences in any criterion construct and cultural variables should only be drawn if there is a substantial number of nations constituting the correlation displaying large variation on the cultural variable of interest.

One of the first studies that examined differences in JS ratings for a large variety of nations was conducted by Haire *et al.* (1966). The authors surveyed more than a 1,000 managers from 14 nations, and observed lower levels of JS among participants from Argentina, Chile, India, Italy, and Spain, whereas managers from Sweden reported the highest mean level of JS. Although Haire *et al.* (1966) argued that the differences reflected cultural differences between the national samples, cultural variables responsible for the observed differences in JS were neither defined nor measured in the study. More recently, Liu *et al.* (2004) provided overall JS scores for 17 nations based on a multi-facet measure of JS applied in a multinational organization. Results indicated higher levels of JS among participants from Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, and lower satisfaction among respondents from Japan, Spain, and France. Using data from the World Values Survey II, Oishi *et al.* (1999) reported that of the 39 nations included in the analysis, the highest JS was found in Switzerland, Poland, and Denmark, whereas the nations with the lowest JS included Turkey, Belarus, and Bulgaria. Based on data of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), Hatrup, Mueller, and Aguirre (2008) found the highest levels of JS in the Philippines, Denmark, and Switzerland and the lowest JS in Poland, Russia, and Japan. Again, none of these more recent multinational studies provided cultural explanations for the cross-national variation in JS ratings. Only a handful of studies have explicitly examined the relationship between national differences in JS and variations in cultural variables.

The International Survey Research (ISR) (2002) programme adopted the cultural dimensions identified by Hofstede (1980) and attempted to examine their relationships with between-nation differences in JS ratings. In this study, the power distance and individualism scores provided by Hofstede (1980) were aggregated to create one cultural value index and masculinity and uncertainty avoidance were aggregated to create a second index. JS data for respondents from 10 nations were then correlated with national-level scores on the two culture composite scales. Overall JS ratings were not significantly correlated with either of the two cultural indices; however, some of the specific satisfaction judgments of each nation (e.g. leadership, advanced training, management) showed significant correlations with one or the other of the two cultural value indices. Similarly, Hui, Yee, and Eastman (1995) examined the correlation between

mean JS data from 14 nations and Hofstede's individualism index. Results failed to show a significant correlation between individualism and global satisfaction, but significant negative correlations were observed between individualism and job facet satisfactions related for working relationships and communication within the company ($r = -.47$ and $-.46$). Correlations between individualism and satisfaction with other job facets, such as satisfaction with salary, work conditions, and job safety were not significant. In a more recent study Huang and Van de Vliert (2004) examined cross-cultural and cross-occupational variation in JS using data from a multi-national company in 39 countries. Results revealed a significant correlation of JS and cultural individualism. Additional results were reported by Hui, Au, and Fock (2004), using data from 33 nations in the World Value Survey II. Results showed a significant relation of national level JS and cultural power distance.

Taken together, although a number of differences in JS ratings across nations have been reported in the literature, only a handful of recent studies have attempted to relate these differences to systematic variation in cultural variables. Of the studies that have examined the relationship of national differences in JS with cultural variables, most have focused on the cultural dimensions described by Hofstede (1980). Overall, results have provided little support for a systematic relationship between nation-level differences in JS and Hofstede's (1980) culture dimensions, suggesting the need to examine other variables representing important cultural or national differences that might relate to job attitudes. The present study explores the role of national positivity (Diener *et al.*, 2000) as a potential variable associated with cross-national differences in JS ratings.

Cultural positivity

Recently, the concept of positivity as a cultural variable has been offered as an explanation of national differences in levels of global life satisfaction (Diener *et al.*, 2000). According to Diener and his colleagues, cultural positivity affects perceptions of the world, how people remember information and experiences, and how they come to a decision. Members of cultures high in cultural positivity tend to have a more positive view of life than members of nations that are lower in positivity. Diener *et al.* (2000) further suggest that cultural differences in positivity are determined by culturally bound socialization processes and transmitted by cultural norms associated with the degree to which happiness is valued and considered desirable within a cultural group.

Conceptually, positivity at the national level has been considered analogous to PA at the individual level of analysis (Diener *et al.*, 2000). Watson (1988) defines PA at the individual level as a pleasurable way of dealing with the environment. It includes both the experience of positive emotions, and a high activation level (Cropanzano, Weiss, Hale, & Reb, 2003). Hence, high PA is best described by terms such as 'excited, delighted, active, alert, and determined' (Watson, 1988, p. 128), whereas low PA is best defined by 'sluggish, tired, depressed' (Watson, 1988, p. 128). PA has been used to account for evidence of a dispositional component of individual differences in JS ratings, and has long been considered one of the most important, if not the single most important, dispositional variable associated with differences in JS ratings (e.g. Agho, Mueller, & Price, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; De Loach, 2003; Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002; Heller, Judge, & Watson, 2002; Munz, Huelsman, Konold, & McKinney, 1996; Thoresen & Judge, 1997; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003; Watson & Slack, 1993). PA is usually considered conceptually similar or even equivalent to extraversion (e.g. Costa & McCrae, 1980; Diener & Lucas, 1999; Watson & Clark, 1992), although PA

is more specific than the broader extraversion construct, and thus shows stronger correlations with JS ratings (e.g. Thoresen *et al.*, 2003). At the national level, therefore, positivity is presumed to reflect cultural differences in the value placed on positive affect and a positive evaluation of experience, and thus influences individual level PA through normative and socialization processes.

Two disparate approaches have been used to assess positivity at the national level of analysis, with both approaches presumed to provide similar information about cultural differences. A direct rating method, which involves administering a measure of positivity to members of a culture and then aggregating results to the national level is easiest to understand given the long tradition in psychometrics of direct measurement. For example, Suh and Oishi (2002) provided positivity scores for 39 nations using translated versions of Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969). South American nations such as Puerto Rico, Columbia, and Peru showed the highest level of positivity, whereas nations with the lowest level of positivity included Japan, Lithuania, Hong Kong, and China. The national level positivity scores correlated .71 with national mean scores on a measure of overall life satisfaction. More recently, Thompson (2007) compared scores on a translated version of the PA scale developed by Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988) across 16 nations. Results showed that PA was highest in the Philippines, USA, UK, and India and lowest in Japan, Taiwan, China, and Vietnam.

An alternative, indirect measurement approach was also developed by Diener and colleagues (Diener *et al.*, 2000) to assess cross-national differences in positivity. As a number of authors have noted (e.g. Hattrup, Mueller, & Aguirre, 2007; Hofstede, 2001; Smith, 2004), direct measurement procedures are limited in their ability to provide unambiguous information about cross-national differences because of differences across nations in response styles and response biases, such as acquiescence. Thus, differences across nations in direct ratings of PA may reflect differences across nations in both true affect levels, and in overall response tendencies, norms, and cultural beliefs. Consequently, researchers have recently sought alternative, indirect methods for assessing cross-national differences that are unconfounded by cultural differences in response styles or acquiescence. For example, Hattrup *et al.* (2007) showed that conclusions about the magnitude and direction of cross national differences in work values depended on whether a direct or indirect operationalization of work values was used.

Diener *et al.*'s (2000) indirect method of measuring cultural positivity is based on the *judgment model* of subjective well-being described by Schwarz and Strack (1999). This model assumes that the basis of well-being judgments differs depending on whether a global or a specific judgment is given. According to Schwarz and Strack (1999), global judgments, such as judgments about one's overall well-being, are more complex and require the processing of a vast amount of information compared to judgments of specific things, such as social relationships, self, education, and recreation. Therefore, global judgments are more apt to rely on judgmental heuristics, such as current affect or mood, compared to specific judgments. Judgments of satisfaction with specific facets are based on a smaller amount of information and mainly reflect objective conditions, and therefore, should be less influenced by affective dispositions. Thus, the global judgments of happy people, who are more likely to be in a good mood at the time of the judgment because of a positive disposition, should be more positive than those of unhappy people, who are more likely to be in a bad mood at the time of judgment, given the same level of satisfaction with the specific aspects of one's life.

Based on this logic, Diener *et al.* (2000) argued that the discrepancy between global judgments and specific judgments serves as a good indicator and indirect measure of

dispositional PA. Consequently, to measure cultural positivity at the national level, Diener *et al.* (2000) compared global satisfaction judgments (e.g. satisfaction with one's education) with specific satisfaction judgments (e.g. satisfaction with one's professors, textbooks, and lectures) provided by college students from 41 nations (Oishi & Diener, 2001). National differences in these discrepancy scores indicate national differences in positivity. Results showed higher positivity among South American nations, such as Puerto Rico, Columbia, and Peru. The US ranked 8th of the 41 nations, and European nations were distributed all across the scale with highest values for Spain, which ranked 3rd, and Portugal, which ranked 6th. Nations with lowest positivity values were mainly nations of the Pacific Rim such as Japan, China, and Korea. The national positivity scores showed a positive correlation with global life satisfaction at the nation level ($r = .57$), and regression analyses indicated that positivity explained a significant incremental portion of the variance in life satisfaction, after controlling for national wealth. As noted, the indirect measurement of cultural positivity has the advantage that response bias is minimized. This is because an acquiescent response set would be independent of item content and specificity, and thus should affect global and specific judgments equally (e.g. Johnson, Kulesa, Cho, & Shavitt, 2005; Smith, 2004), resulting in discrepancy or residual scores that are also independent of the effects of national differences in acquiescent responding.

Given the conceptual underpinnings of the cultural positivity construct, we assume that national positivity is not only related to cross-national differences in life satisfaction, but also plays an important role in explaining cross-national differences in JS. This seems especially reasonable given that, as noted above, at the individual-level of analysis PA has been considered the most important dispositional variable associated with differences in individual JS (e.g. Agho *et al.*, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; De Loach, 2003; Grandey *et al.*, 2002; Heller *et al.*, 2002; Munz *et al.*, 1996; Thoresen & Judge, 1997; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003; Watson & Slack, 1993). More specifically, the literature reviewed above leads to several hypotheses regarding the role of nation-level positivity and JS.

First, we assume that results regarding nation-level positivity that have been reported in the literature will reveal a consistent pattern of national differences, and will converge with evidence of national differences in positivity derived from JS ratings in the present study. As noted, of the studies that have compared positivity across nations, Latin American nations tend to score highest, whereas nations of the Pacific Rim score lower. Thus,

Hypothesis 1: Cross-national differences in positivity reported in the literature correlate across studies, and correlate positively with positivity scores derived from JS data in the present study.

Second, given that PA is considered conceptually equivalent to, or an element of extraversion (e.g. Costa & McCrae, 1980; Diener & Lucas, 1999; Watson & Clark, 1992), we predict that extraversion at the national level will correlate with positivity at the nation-level. Diener *et al.* (2000) suggest that positivity is a value that represents the importance placed on the display of positive affect, and is communicated to members of the culture through socialization and social influence processes. Higher levels of national positivity raise the overall level of positive affect reported by individual members of the nation, compared to individuals in nations that are lower in positivity. Thus, given the close correspondence between PA and extraversion at the individual level, we assume that nations that are higher in average positivity will also be higher in average extraversion.

Hypothesis 2: Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate positively with cross-national differences in extraversion.

Third, studies have shown a consistent positive relationship between measures of positivity at the national level and national differences in mean levels of overall life satisfaction (Diener *et al.*, 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002). PA at the individual level of analysis has also shown consistent positive relationships with measures of JS (e.g. Agho *et al.*, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; De Loach, 2003; Grandey *et al.*, 2002; Heller *et al.*, 2002; Munz *et al.*, 1996; Thoresen & Judge, 1997; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003; Watson & Slack, 1993). Therefore, we predict that national differences in JS are systematically associated with differences in nation-level positivity. We examine the correlation between nation-level positivity scores and mean satisfaction levels, using data available for the present study and mean JS levels reported in several other recent studies. This allows us to assess the degree to which correlations involving national positivity scores are consistent across various samples.

Hypothesis 3: Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate positively with overall JS.

Finally, as noted above, the indirect measure of cultural positivity developed by Diener *et al.* (2000), is presumed to be independent of acquiescent responding. Because acquiescence should affect global and specific judgments equally, the residual obtained after regressing global judgments on specific ratings should be independent of acquiescence effects. This is an important consideration because, as noted above, several studies have indicated systematic cross-cultural differences in response styles (e.g. acquiescence), confounding the interpretation of observed cross-national differences obtained from direct measurement methods (e.g. Hui & Triandis, 1989; Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Indeed, Smith (2004) demonstrated considerable convergent validity among different measures of acquiescence used across a variety of studies and nations. Thus,

Hypothesis 4: Cross-national differences in positivity will correlate with overall JS ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in acquiescent response sets.

Method

In the present study, the JS ratings of employees of six large multinational organizations were used to calculate nation-level positivity scores. A separate sample of respondents from three different multinational firms was used to calculate mean nation-level JS scores. Nation-level positivity scores were then correlated with positivity scores obtained in other research, nation-level extraversion scores, measures of acquiescent responding, and overall JS ratings.

Participants

Sample 1

JS data from employee opinion surveys conducted in the years from 1998 to 2005 in six multinational organizations were used to calculate cultural positivity scores for each nation. In total, data from 55,006 employees in 41 nations were available. Nations with fewer than 20 respondents were excluded from the analysis due to a lack of reliable results. The number of organizations analysed in each nation varies between one and six:

15 nations were represented by one organization; 13 nations with two organizations; 8 nations with three organizations; 3 nations with four organizations; 1 nation with five; and 1 nation with six organizations. The nations included in the analysis reflected a broad spectrum of different nations across all continents: 20 European nations; 7 Asian nations; 6 South American and 3 North American nations; 4 African nations and Australia. The organizations included in the analysis come from several industries, including packaging (company 1, company 2, and company 5), automotive (company 3), international services (company 4), and energy (company 6).

Sample 2

JS data from employee opinion surveys in the years 2005 and 2006 in three different multinational organizations were used to calculate mean JS scores for each nation. In total, data from 85,352 employees in 47 nations were available. Nations with fewer than 20 respondents were excluded from the analysis, as were individuals who were missing data on the nation variable, resulting in a total of 82,818 responses used for the analysis. Information regarding the job role of participants was available for all three companies. Altogether, 73,148 of these participants were regular employees, whereas 8,783 of the participants had supervisory functions. The remaining 887 employees included in the analysis did not have information on the data regarding their job role. The number of organizations analysed in each nation varied between one and three; 24 nations were represented by one organization, 16 nations by two organizations, and 7 nations by three organizations. Again, the nations included in the analysis represented a broad spectrum of different nations across six continents: 25 European nations; 10 Asian nations; 5 South American and 3 North American nations; and 3 African nations and Australia. Thirty-six of these nations were represented in both Sample 1 and Sample 2. The organizations came from several different industries, including automotive (company 1), energy (company 2), and sales (company 3). The organizations in Sample 2 are independent of organizations constituting Sample 1.

Measures and procedure

Job satisfaction

JS in both samples was measured with a multi-faceted inventory, administered to all employees of each of the multinational firms. The measure contained items for several job facets. One item was written to assess each of several specific facets of the job, including the job itself, co-workers, supervision, company management, learning and development, working conditions, and compensation. These facets correspond closely to four of the five facets of the JDI (pay, promotions, co-workers, supervision, and work itself), and two additional facets listed by Locke (1976, working conditions, company and management). The facets were selected to provide an assessment of attitudes towards relevant *agents* (co-workers, supervision, and management) and of *events and conditions* associated with one's work (compensation, working conditions, job itself, and learning and development) (Locke, 1976) to resemble a broad variety of specific job aspects. In addition, one item was written to assess global JS. A composite JS score for Sample 1 and Sample 2 was based on the aggregation of all available JS items.

Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale to respond to each item. Questionnaires were translated into the language most suitable for respondents from a given country by bilinguals of an external consulting institute, and then back translated by bilinguals until

acceptable translation accuracy was achieved. The items were selected from a broader JS measure. Evidence of the construct validity of this measure was reported in a previous article (reference omitted for blind review). In that study, a composite satisfaction scale formed by combining all of the items correlated substantially with both the JDI ($r = .868$) and MSQ-Short Form ($r = .833$) in a separate sample of 100 working adults in Germany. Results also supported the psychometric equivalence of the measure across nations and organizations and consistent relationships with organizational commitment (reference omitted for blind review).

As noted above, the present study examines the correlation between nation-level positivity and mean satisfaction levels, using data available for the current research and national mean satisfaction scores reported in several recent multinational studies. We chose to include recent studies that provided nation mean level satisfaction scores for 15 or more nations. Liu *et al.* (2004) provided mean satisfaction scores for 17 nations, using the German Job Satisfaction Survey (GJSS), which had been shown to be psychometrically equivalent across groups. Oishi *et al.* (1999) provided mean satisfaction scores for 39 nations, with a total sample of 54,446 individual participants, collected as part of the World Values Survey II. Hatrup *et al.* (2008) reported JS data from 1997 for 24 nations using data from the Work Orientations II module of the ISSP.

National positivity

Using the JS data from Sample 1 of the present research, we calculated nation-level positivity scores following the procedures described by Diener *et al.* (2000). As noted above, participants responded to seven items that reflected satisfaction with specific job facets, including job itself, co-workers, supervision, company management, learning and development, working conditions, and compensation and one global item that was written to reflect overall JS. A nation-level positivity score was calculated as the mean standardized residual obtained from the regression of individual overall JS on the individual mean of the facet satisfaction scores. Thus, the standardized residuals in this regression reflect the discrepancy between global JS and the aggregate of the satisfaction levels with specific aspects of the job; higher values indicate higher levels of positivity. The national mean of the resulting standardized regression residuals was then used as a measure of nation-level positivity for each nation.

To compare national positivity values reported by Diener *et al.* (2000) with those obtained in the present study, we coded the positivity scores reported by Diener *et al.* (2000) and correlated them with the values obtained in the present research. We also investigated the correlation between positivity values calculated in the present research with those provided by Suh and Oishi (2002), who used direct ratings of positivity based on Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969). After verifying high convergent validity, a composite measure of nation level positivity was formed by first standardizing each of the three independent measures, the two from previous research (Diener *et al.*, 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002) and the third obtained from Sample 1 of the present research, and then averaging the scores within each country. This had the effect of increasing the number of nations that could be included in an analysis of the overall correlation between nation-level positivity and JS.

Extraversion

Nation-level scores on extraversion were available from a recent study conducted by van Hemert, van de Vijver, Poortinga, and Georgas (2002). The authors examined the structural and functional equivalence of the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ)

within and between nations, and reported extraversion scores for 38 nations with a total sample of 68,374 adult respondents. In addition, we utilized national-level extraversion scores provided by McCrae (2002) for 36 nations. These scores were derived from published and unpublished studies using the NEO Personality Inventory (NEO_PI_R; Costa & McCrae, 1992), administered to a variety of samples including students, clinical samples, and twins, in various nations. Values from different subgroups within each nation were averaged to form a single composite score for the nation, and hence, sample composition may vary considerably across nations.

Nation-level control variables

Working conditions. To control for national level differences in working conditions, we calculated the mean of the items included in the JS instrument that were designed to measure the working conditions facet for each nation in Sample 1. These items referred to evaluations of work equipment, health and safety measures, and physical working conditions in the work setting (e.g. lighting, space, noise, etc.).

National wealth and development. We also incorporated a measure of national wealth and development in our analysis as a control for nation-level differences in objective working conditions. There are numerous indicators of national wealth and development, and most of them are highly correlated (Georgas & Berry, 1995; Georgas, van de Vijver, & Berry, 2004). A popular composite measure that incorporates effects of education, literacy, and standard of living conditions, is the Human Development Index (HDI) measured as the log of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) in US dollars (e.g. Basabe *et al.*, 2002; Ivanova, Arcelus, & Srinivasan, 1999; Kirkcaldy, Furnham, & Siefen, 2004).

Acquiescence

To control for cross-national differences in acquiescent responding, several estimates of acquiescence at the national level were examined. Smith (2004) recently demonstrated high convergent validity among several of these measures. Among the most well-known are Hofstede's (2001) IMP values, which are obtained by averaging responses across a large number of unrelated survey items; higher scores indicate a tendency to provide higher average ratings. IMP values provided by Hofstede (2001) were available for 50 nations. A second measure of nation-level acquiescence was obtained from Smith, Peterson, and Schwartz (2002) using a method similar to Hofstede's (2001). This value was used by Smith (2004) as an estimate of overall acquiescent response bias and is available for 53 nations. To assess a somewhat different type of response bias, we also used the nation-level mean values on the Eysenck Lie Scale, reported by van Hemert *et al.* (2002) for 36 nations. Smith (2004) reported moderate to high intercorrelations at the nation level among these three measures of acquiescent responding. Because Smith's (2004) and van Hemert *et al.*'s (2002) acquiescence measures are scored so that higher values indicate higher acquiescence, whereas Hofstede's IMP values indicate lower acquiescence, the IMP scores were recoded in this study to ensure comparability with the other two acquiescence measures as well as to enable the calculation of an acquiescence composite score.

Analysis

All of the analyses that were conducted to test the study hypotheses were undertaken at the nation level. To evaluate the convergent validity of the national positivity scores obtained in the present research, we calculated zero order correlations between the values obtained in Sample 1 with the positivity scores reported by Diener *et al.* (2000) and Suh and Oishi (2002). To test Hypothesis 2, we correlated the national positivity scores with nation mean extraversion values reported by van Hemert *et al.* (2002) and McCrae (2002). Hypothesis 3 was tested by correlating the national positivity scores obtained in Sample 1 with the mean JS values obtained in Sample 2. Correlations were also calculated between the different positivity scores and nation-level mean JS ratings reported by Liu *et al.* (2004), Oishi *et al.* (1999), and Hatrup *et al.* (2008). Multinational organizations often replicate working conditions and procedures in their foreign subsidiaries (e.g. DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Jaeger, 1983; Kilduff, 1992; Schneider, 1988). Therefore, we repeated the analysis of the correlations between national positivity and the JS scores obtained in Sample 1 separately within each organization, to help control for differences in working conditions across nations. Due to the lower *N* and limited range of countries within each single company, we relied on the composite positivity score obtained by averaging standardized values on the three separate measures of positivity described above. Similarly, to control for the influence of job level (Huang & Van de Vliert, 2004) we repeated the analysis separately for regular employees and for supervisors across all three companies. Again, nations with less than 20 participants within a company or certain job role were excluded from analysis.

Hypothesis 4 was tested with hierarchical regression analysis, using the composite positivity score and the JS values obtained in Sample 1, Sample 2, and the studies reported by Liu *et al.* (2004), Oishi *et al.* (1999), and Hatrup *et al.* (2008).

In a first step, we entered the national level facet mean for the working conditions facet and the HDI in the regression analysis that used the overall JS scores as the dependent measure. In the second step, the average of standardized values for the three acquiescence measures was then entered in the regression analysis to control for nation-level differences in acquiescent responding. Finally, the composite positivity score was entered in a separate step in the regressions; a significant increase in R^2 after entering the national positivity scores in this regression analysis indicates support for Hypothesis 4.

Results

Table 1 presents the means for JS and positivity scores for the 53 nations represented in Sample 1 and Sample 2. Table 2 displays the zero order correlations between the variables examined in this research. Hypothesis 1 predicted significant correlations between the positivity scores obtained from Sample 1, and the positivity values reported by Diener *et al.* (2000) and Suh and Oishi (2002). As can be seen in Table 2, the national positivity values obtained using the JS data in Sample 1 correlated .67 ($p < .001$, $N = 23$) with the values reported by Diener *et al.* (2000), and correlated .60 ($p < .01$, $N = 24$) with the values presented by Suh and Oishi (2002). The Diener *et al.* (2000) scores also correlated .59 ($p < .001$, $N = 37$) with the Suh and Oishi (2002) scores. Hypothesis 2 predicted a positive correlation between positivity and extraversion, and as can be seen in Table 2, the nation-level extraversion scores reported by van Hemert *et al.* (2002) correlated significantly with all three measures of national positivity (r 's ranged from .42 to .61, p 's $< .05$) and with the composite positivity value obtained

Table 1. Sample size and means for positivity and job satisfaction

Nation	Sample 1			Sample 2	
	Positivity scores	Job satisfaction	N	Job satisfaction	N
Argentina	0.30	4.04	86	3.62	30
Australia	0.01	3.59	182	3.69	151
Austria	0.01	3.62	1,101	3.81	729
Belarus	0.38	3.87	66	3.39	36
Belgium	-0.07	4.05	243	3.61	935
Brazil	0.44	4.11	295	3.97	1,973
Canada	0.11	3.77	958	3.63	721
Chile				3.50	281
Columbia	0.37	3.96	85	4.01	31
Croatia				3.71	93
Czech Republic	0.02	3.59	369	3.84	4,435
Denmark				3.60	1,140
Egypt	0.05	3.84	65	3.52	32
France	-0.14	3.50	1,261	3.61	2,590
Germany	-0.06	4.44	29,859	3.66	36,065
Greece	-0.01	3.42	52	3.73	514
Hungary	-0.28	3.49	429	3.55	4,454
India	0.10	4.39	449	3.44	549
Indonesia				3.84	44
Ireland	0.47	3.59	214	4.24	336
Italy	0.35	3.69	743	3.54	577
Japan	-0.19	3.13	285	3.03	535
Korea, Republic of	-0.34	3.15	55	3.35	30
Malaysia	-0.56	3.32	87		
Mexico	0.28	3.94	135	3.71	3,708
Morocco				3.47	32
Netherlands	0.20	3.86	43	3.60	303
Nigeria	0.60	4.98	36		
Norway				3.72	247
Peru	0.47	3.94	41		
Philippines	0.43	3.96	74	3.84	1,589
Poland	0.28	3.90	478	3.98	31
Portugal	0.66	3.89	36	3.67	2,136
Puerto Rico	0.40	5.04	31		
Romania				3.73	1,976
Russian Federation	0.02	3.64	74	3.57	350
Saudi Arabia				3.73	65
Serbia				4.01	175
Singapore	0.14	3.72	78	3.50	44
Slovakia				3.42	147
South Africa	-0.14	3.55	275	3.68	1,570
Spain	0.17	3.75	288	3.44	312
Sweden	0.57	3.90	1,158	3.67	1,792
Switzerland	0.60	4.03	63	3.91	531
Taiwan, Province of				3.89	83
Thailand	0.50	3.88	153		
Tunisia	-0.11	3.55	33		

Table 1. (Continued)

Nation	Sample 1			Sample 2	
	Positivity scores	Job satisfaction	N	Job satisfaction	N
Turkey	-0.30	3.85	79	3.71	414
Ukraine	0.04	3.68	39		
United Arab Emirates	0.15	3.92	33	3.81	196
United Kingdom	-0.03	3.69	3,636	3.43	3,152
United States	0.09	3.57	11,175	3.61	7,610
Venezuela	0.31	3.86	164	4.20	45

by averaging the three measures ($r = .58, p < .01, N = 28$). The correlations with the national extraversion scores from McCrae (2002) are also substantial, ranging from .39 to .44 for the different positivity values.

Table 2 also presents correlations between the positivity values obtained in Sample 1 and the JS means obtained from Sample 2 and from the Liu *et al.* (2004), Oishi *et al.* (1999), and Hatrup *et al.* (2007) studies. As can be seen in the table, the national positivity values obtained in Sample 1 correlated .52 ($p < .01, N = 34$) with mean satisfaction in Sample 2, .57 ($p < .05, N = 16$) with the JS data provided by Liu *et al.* (2004), .42 ($p < .05, N = 26$) with the JS data obtained by Oishi *et al.* (1999), and .55 ($p < .05, N = 16$) with the national ISSP JS values reported by Hatrup *et al.* (2008). Table 2 also shows that the national positivity scores provided by Diener *et al.* (2000) correlated with the JS data of Sample 1 ($r = .49; p < .05, N = 23$) and Sample 2 ($r = .53; p < .01, N = 23$). Correlations with results reported by Hatrup *et al.* (2008) ($r = .50; p > .05, N = 9$) and Liu *et al.* (2004), ($r = .43; p > .05, N = 12$) were also substantial but were not statistically significant due to the low N . A similar picture emerged for the positivity scores provided by Suh and Oishi (2002). Again, the correlation with the JS data of Sample 1 ($r = .54; p < .01, N = 24$) and Sample 2 ($r = .52; p < .01, N = 24$) was significant. Correlations with the JS data of the other authors are also substantial but remained not significant due to a low number of nations included in these tests.

Table 3 shows the results of the analyses that were conducted within companies and job roles to control for potential differences due to job conditions. Overall, correlations calculated within each company showed a similar pattern as the results obtained from the combined data sets, with large and significant correlations observed between the composite positivity measure and JS in each organization (r 's = .63, .51, and .58, in company 1, 2, and 3, respectively). Correlations calculated within each company between satisfaction and the three individual positivity measures were more variable, owing to the small number of countries included in these calculations (N 's ranged from 14 to 22 in company 1, from 14 to 22 in company 2, and from 13 to 20 in company 3), and hence, the results of within-company analyses are more reliable when the positivity composite is used rather than the positivity values obtained in the individual studies. Similarly, analyses conducted within the two job roles showed the same overall pattern as the combined samples, with large and significant correlations for both supervisors ($r = .46, p < .05, N = 30$) and employees ($r = .56, p < .001, N = 36$).

Table 4 shows the results of the hierarchical regressions that were conducted to test hypothesis 4. As can be seen in the table, the HDI was significantly associated with JS in

Table 2. Pearson correlation between national positivity values, extraversion, acquiescence, and job satisfaction

	Positivity			Extraversion		IMP Hofstede (2001)	Lie scale van Hemert et al. (2002)	Cultural mean Smith (2002)	Job satisfaction			
	Composite	Sample 1	Oishi (2002)	Suh and Oishi (2002)	Diener et al. (2000)				McCrae and Allik (2002)	van Hemert et al. (2002)	Sample 1	Sample 2
Positivity												
Sample 1	.93***											
Suh and Oishi (2002)	.87***	.60**										
Diener et al. (2000)	.88***	.67***	.59***									
Extraversion												
McCrae (2002)	.42*	.39	.41	.44								
van Hemert et al. (2002)	.58**	.42*	.61**	.55*	.24							
IMP												
Hofstede (2001)	.30	.32	.38	.49*	-.24	.15						
Lie scale												
van Hemert et al. (2002)	-.08	.31	-.06	-.06	-.47	-.03	.71***					
Cultural mean												
Smith et al. (2002)	.04	.12	.08	-.10	-.31	.31	.20	.36				
Job satisfaction												
Sample 1	.56***	.56***	.54**	.49*	.28	.48*	.28	.39	.26			
Sample 2	.60***	.52**	.52**	.53**	.37	.27	.35*	-.01	-.09	.32		
Hatrup et al. (2008)	.53*	.55*	.30	.50	.31	.69**	.38	.10	-.07	.58*	.31	
Liu et al. (2004)	.58*	.57*	.44	.43	.57*	.43	.12	.01	.47	.60*	.56*	.94***
Oishi et al. (1999)	.35	.42*	.06	.30	.44*	.42*	.22	-.43*	.20	.07	.17	.58**
												.54*

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Pearson correlation between national positivity values and job satisfaction within different companies and job roles

	Positivity			Job satisfaction			
	Composite	Sample I	Suh and Oishi (2002)	Diener et al. (2000)	Company I	Company II	Company III
Positivity							
Composite							
Sample I	.93***						
Suh and Oishi (2002)	.87***	.60**					
Diener et al. (2000)	.88***	.67***	.59***				
Job satisfaction							
Company I	.63**	.54**	.53	.43			
Company II	.51*	.33	.48	.73**	.04		
Company III	.58**	.46*	.05	.09	.31	.41	
Employee	.56***	.48**	.56**	.47*	.95***	.74***	.52**
Supervisor	.46*	.43*	.27	.43	.66**	.64**	.57**

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 4. Results of hierarchical regression of national job satisfaction (JS) on acquiescence and national positivity

Predictors	JS											
	Sample 1			Sample 2			Liu et al. (2004)			Hattrup et al. (2008)		
	R ²	β		R ²	β		R ²	β		R ²	β	
Step 1	.34			.02			.23			.01		
Human development index		-.49**			-.13			-.06			-.02	
Perceived working conditions		.24			-.03			.46			.12	
Step 2	.35			.02			.34			.03		
Human development index		-.56**			-.08			-.28			.10	
Perceived working conditions		.24			-.03			.51			.12	
Acquiescence composite		-.10			.07			-.42			.17	
Step 3	.60***			.40**			.63*			.42*		
Human development index		-.58***			-.24			-.32			-.12	
Perceived working conditions		.26*			-.09			.25			.02	
Acquiescence composite		-.18			-.11			-.46			-.17	
Positivity composite		.50***			.64***			.60*			.68*	

* $p < .05$ level; ** $p < .01$ level; *** $p < .001$ level.

Sample 1 in all phases of the analysis and with the JS values reported by Oishi *et al.* (1999) in phase two of the analysis, although in opposite directions. The nation-level working conditions scores, obtained from Sample 1, were not significantly related to nation-level satisfaction, except in the final phase of the analysis of Sample 1. The acquiescence composite was not significantly related to nation-level JS in any of the analyses shown in Table 4. In contrast, in every sample the positivity composite scores calculated for each nation were significantly related to overall JS, after controlling for working conditions, national growth and development, and acquiescence.

Discussion

As noted, the JS construct plays a central role in the field of industrial and organizational psychology (Judge *et al.*, 2001; Spector, 1997). However, little is known about cross-national differences in the construct, particularly about potential sources of variation in mean JS levels in different nations (Judge *et al.*, 2001). The explication of cultural influences on JS ratings helps to advance our theoretical understanding of the construct and is an important prerequisite for the meaningful interpretation and comparison of JS and employee survey data obtained in applied multinational settings. The present study extended previous research in the areas of subjective well-being/life satisfaction, and JS, by examining the role of national differences in positivity as an explanation for cross-national differences in JS. Like PA at the individual level of analysis (e.g. Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; Thoresen & Judge, 1997; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003), differences in positivity at the nation-level were predicted to relate systematically to cross-national differences in JS. Thus, the present research first examined the degree to which a measure of positivity derived from JS ratings showed convergent validity with measures of positivity used in previous work, and then examined the degree to which nation-level differences in positivity predicted national differences in JS.

Following the procedures outlined by Diener *et al.* (2000), we developed a measure of national positivity by taking the national mean of the standardized residuals that were obtained from regressing overall JS ratings on the mean satisfaction rating for seven specific job facets. As predicted, the positivity measure developed in the present research correlated substantially with the nation-level scores provided by Diener *et al.* (2000) and by Suh and Oishi (2002), which also showed high convergent validity with each other. Consistent with previous research, the national positivity scores calculated in this study, based on a large variety of nations, show higher positivity values among Latin-American nations, and lower positivity values in East-Asian nations.

Convergent validity of the positivity scores developed in the present research was also demonstrated by the positive correlation with two independent indicators of national level extraversion, which is presumed to relate closely with PA at the individual level of analysis (Costa & McCrae, 1980). Thus, overall the results support the hypothesis that nations vary systematically in their levels of cultural positivity. Indeed, the pattern of cross-national differences in positivity seems to be rather robust in regard to variation in sample characteristics and in the operationalization that is used to measure the positivity construct. The national positivity scores compared in this research stemmed from very different satisfaction domains and were operationalized using both an indirect approach (Sample 1; Diener *et al.*, 2000) as well as a direct measurement approach that was based on the Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale (Suh & Oishi, 2002). The samples used in the present research consisted of students

(Diener *et al.*, 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002) and adult employees of multinational firms (Sample 1 and Sample 2). Results provide strong support for the generalizability of the positivity construct across the life satisfaction and JS domains. This supports its potential utility as an explanation for cross-national differences in various attitudes, including life satisfaction and job attitudes.

As predicted, results of the present research demonstrated strong and reasonably consistent relationships between the various measures of national-level positivity and overall JS as measured in the present samples and reported by other authors. The composite positivity score and all three of the positivity scores obtained from separate samples correlated positively and significantly with the JS ratings collected in Sample 1 and Sample 2 of the present research. The relationship between national level positivity and JS measures also appeared to be very consistent when analysed separately within each of the three organizations constituting Sample 2 of the present study, and when examined across different job levels. Furthermore the national positivity scores obtained from Sample 1 of the present research correlated stronger with the JS values reported by other authors than did the positivity scores reported by Diener *et al.* (2000) and Suh and Oishi (2002). This may suggest some tendency for positivity derived from the JS domain to predict differences in JS across nations better than measures of positivity derived from different domains. Nevertheless, regardless of how it is operationalized, nation-level positivity has a fairly consistent relationship with cross-national differences in JS ratings.

Previous research has reported significant correlations between national differences in JS ratings and national indices of acquiescent responding (e.g. Johnson *et al.*, 2005). Moreover, differences in JS also reflect differences in real working conditions. Thus, to test the incremental contribution of national positivity in explaining cross-national differences in JS, we also performed hierarchical regression analysis controlling for cross-national differences in perceived working conditions, national wealth and development, and acquiescence. Results of these analyses showed that national positivity contributed significant incremental prediction to the prediction of cross-national variation in JS after controlling for these potentially confounding variables. The proportion of variance in cross-national differences in JS explained by national positivity was consistently larger than the proportion explained by national levels of acquiescence across all of the samples investigated.

Overall, the consistent association between the national positivity scores obtained in Sample 1 and the average JS scores from various samples and studies is striking. National differences in positivity relate consistently to differences across borders in mean levels of JS, and this relationship remains robust after controlling for cross-national differences in acquiescent responding, perceived working conditions, and national wealth and prosperity. This underscores the potential value of the positivity construct as an explanation of cross-national differences in JS levels. From a theoretical point of view, the results of the present research suggest an important cultural difference with the potential to influence perceptions, memories and evaluations, and ratings of specific and global job characteristics. In this sense, the results of the present research are consistent with findings at the individual level of analysis of significant and consistent associations between individual PA and individual JS ratings (e.g. Agho *et al.*, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; De Loach, 2003; Grandey *et al.*, 2002; Heller *et al.*, 2002; Munz *et al.*, 1996; Thoresen & Judge, 1997; Thoresen *et al.*, 2003; Watson & Slack, 1993). The present research extends these findings to the nation-level of analysis, and demonstrates that measures of national positivity relate significantly with JS differences

across national borders. Research is clearly needed to build on the present findings to investigate the possible sources of cross-national differences in positivity, and the implications of these differences for our understanding of intra- and international variation in organizational behaviour.

From a practical point of view, the results of the present research underscore the need to consider cultural and cross-national differences when evaluating the results of job attitude measures implemented in multinational settings. Certainly, the findings of the present research suggest a need for consideration of the role of cross-national differences in positivity when interpreting differences in mean satisfaction levels across national borders. Whereas JS ratings obviously reflect the influences of actual and perceived working conditions, and hence, differences in satisfaction ratings across nations reflect these real and perceived differences, results of the present research also underscore the important role of national differences in positivity as a determinant of JS ratings obtained in multinational research. National positivity might, for example, be considered an important covariate to control statistically prior to evaluating cross-national differences in adjusted satisfaction levels. The effective management of human resources in multinational firms requires a thorough understanding of cross-national and cross-cultural influences on the behaviour of employees, and given the findings of the present research, positivity appears to require attention when interpreting results of job attitude measures administered in multinational contexts.

Of course, as in all empirical research, several limitations of the present research need to be noted. Perhaps most significantly, the present study investigated differences across national boundaries in an effort to study the effects of cultural positivity. As Diener *et al.* (2000) explain, cultural positivity represents a cultural value that is transmitted to individual members of the culture through socialization and acculturation processes. Although there are good reasons to assume that important differences exist between nations in a variety of cultural dimensions and patterns (Hofstede & Peterson, 2000), and the use of national boundaries to operationalize culture is commonplace in the literature (see Georgas *et al.*, 2004), variation within national boundaries may be as important as variation between nations in the positivity construct investigated in this research. We encourage researchers to extend the present findings by examining variation in positivity among individuals and naturally occurring and constructed groups.

Furthermore, the data collected for the present research, as well as the values for positivity and JS that were reported in other research and incorporated in the present analyses, relied on an imposed etic approach, which entails using a common structured measurement instrument in each of the disparate national samples. An alternative, emic approach, would by contrast, involve a more qualitative approach whereby unique instruments might be developed in the different nations or groups. The use of imposed etic measures is a common limitation of almost all cross-national research, resulting in part from the difficulty of conducting good multinational qualitative research. Despite the possibility that imposed etic measures may constrain cultural variance, a number of important and replicable differences across national boundaries were observed in the present research, and have been observed by other authors using structured measures (e.g. Hofstede, 1980).

Although the current study provides new insight into cross-national differences in JS ratings, many interesting questions are in need of further research. For example, although the present study provided strong support for the indirect measurement of positivity at the national level, research is needed to explore whether a similar

operationalization can be used effectively to measure variance in positivity at the individual level of analysis. Research is needed that investigates whether individual-level indirect measures of positivity relate in expected ways to measures of JS, extraversion, and other related constructs. Further, research is needed to expand the range of criteria that might be predicted by positivity. For example, research might investigate relationships between positivity and organizational commitment, employee engagement, turnover intentions, and organizational citizenship, at both the national level of analysis and the individual level. We hope the results of the present research encourage additional theoretical and empirical investigation of cross-national differences in JS and the positivity construct.

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Cross-National Generalizability of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Short title: Generalizability of Customer Satisfaction & Loyalty

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Abstract

To examine cross-national differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty the present study focuses on nation-level differences in cultural positivity in a business-to-business context, using data from a large multinational sample in 36 nations. As a prerequisite measurement equivalence of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty scales is tested. To examine the contribution of nation-level differences in cultural positivity, potentially confounding variables, such as indicators of market competitiveness and acquiescence are statistically controlled. After establishing measurement equivalence, the analysis shows that customer loyalty, which represents the broader and more general construct, is affected by national differences in cultural positivity, whereas customer satisfaction is not significantly related to cultural positivity. Moreover, cultural positivity remains a significant correlate of customer loyalty after controlling for indicators of market competitiveness and acquiescence. The research represents an initial exploration of key variables in cross-cultural research and highlights the need to build on the present findings to develop a sophisticated theory about sources of cross-cultural variation in customer attitudes. From a practical point of view, the present findings suggest that differences in mean levels of customer survey responses might not only reflect differences in objective conditions but might also be related to variability in culturally determined variables, such as cultural positivity, affecting individuals' expectations, perceptions or communication styles. This seems to be especially true for more future-oriented and global variables such as customer loyalty. Furthermore, results reveal that a well constructed and translated survey is likely to show measurement equivalence of customer loyalty and customer satisfaction measures.

Keywords: customer satisfaction; customer loyalty; cultural positivity; cross-cultural differences

Cross-National Generalizability of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Introduction

Customer satisfaction and, more recently, customer loyalty have been topics of central interest in the study of consumer behavior (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 1998). Both customer satisfaction and customer loyalty show strong and consistent relationships with central behavioral constructs important for organizational success, such as decreased customer complaints, word-of-mouth, repurchasing behavior, and overall company performance (e.g. Anderson, Fornell, & Lehmann, 1992; Bolton, 1998; Brady & Robertson, 2001; Fornell & Wernerfelt, 1988; Hallowell, 1996; Juhl, Kristensen, & Østergaard, 2002). Given the central role of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in consumer behavior and organizational success, the measurement and improvement of customer satisfaction and the retention of loyal customers are important concerns for most organizations (e.g. Anderson & Mittal, 2000; Johnson, Gustafsson, Andreassen, Lervik, & Cha, 2001). In a multinational context, any attempt to maintain globally high levels of customer retention and effective management depends on the continuous assessment and monitoring of customer satisfaction and loyalty on a cross-national basis (Gilbert, Veloutsou, Goode, & Moutinho, 2004). Customer survey data is therefore frequently collected and compared across different national and regional markets and the obtained results form the basis for organizational interventions, service or product modifications, and innovations. Thus, to examine the degree to which national culture influences customer satisfaction and customer loyalty ratings is of importance.

Yet, despite the interest, much remains unknown about the cross-cultural differences in customer satisfaction and loyalty (Gorn, 1997; Spreng & Chiou, 2002). The limited amount of research on cross-cultural differences in customer satisfaction and loyalty often focus on aspects of cross-cultural measurement equivalence (e.g. Gilbert et al., 2004; Spreng & Chiou, 2002; Ueltschy, Laroche, Eggert, & Bindl, 2007). However, measurement equivalence is only a prerequisite for the test of a more substantial hypothesis on the influence of culture on

customer attitudes. From a practical point of view, the most central or basic question is the influence of culture on the mean levels of the constructs.

In this case, differences in mean levels of customer survey responses might not only reflect differences in objective conditions but might also be related to variability in culturally determined variables affecting individuals' expectations, perceptions or communication styles (Diener, Scollon, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Suh, 2000; Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Mattila, 1999b; Smith, 2004). Recently, an increasing bulk of research speaks of the relevance of variables related to cultural affectivity in explaining cross-national differences in evaluation constructs (e.g. Diener et al., 2000; Gelade, Dobson, & Gilbert, 2006; Mueller, Hattrup, & Hausmann, 2009). In this regard, cultural positivity seems to be a promising cultural dimension explaining individual and cross-national differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Diener et al. (2000) introduces cultural positivity in the domain of life satisfaction and subjective well-being. The authors define positivity as a cultural variable reflecting the tendency of members of a cultural group to experience and express positive affect. According to Diener et al. (2000), culturally bound socialization processes determine the tendency of cultural group members to experience and express positive affect. Furthermore, cultural norms associated with the degree to which happiness is valued and considered desirable within a cultural group transmit this tendency. Cultural positivity shows to be an important cultural variable in explaining differences in life satisfaction judgments (Diener et al., 2000) as well as job satisfaction judgments (Mueller et al., 2009).

Hence, the present research seeks to contribute to the knowledge of cross-cultural consumer behavior by investigating the influence of cultural positivity on customer satisfaction and loyalty controlling for important contextual variables previously related to cross-cultural differences in customer attitudes. In the next section the study provides a brief review of the meaning and measurement of customer satisfaction and loyalty. The research then reviews existing cross-cultural research and develops hypotheses about possible cultural

influences associated with cross-national differences in mean levels of customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty

Although varied conceptualizations appear in the literature, research usually describes customer satisfaction as a post-purchase attitude, or evaluation, following product or service experiences (e.g. Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Kaiser, 2005; Moorman & Oliver, 1997). Very frequently, studies conceptualize this post-purchase evaluation in the light of the confirmation/disconfirmation (C/D) paradigm (e.g. Churchill & Surprenant, 1982; Ueltsch & Krampf, 2001). This paradigm posits that customers evaluate their product or service experiences by comparing performance to some standard. When their standards are met, the result is moderate satisfaction, whereas, positively disconfirmed (exceeded) standards lead to high satisfaction, and negatively disconfirmed (underachieved) standards lead to dissatisfaction (Fournier & Mick, 1999). While the C/D paradigm as a basic framework is widely agreed upon, this paradigm represents a very cognitive approach to the conceptualization of customer satisfaction. Hence, researchers emphasize the incorporation of affective elements in theories of customer satisfaction (e.g. Mano & Oliver, 1993; Moorman & Oliver, 1997; Price, Arnould, & Tierney, 1995). For example, building on the empirical evidence that positive and negative affect relate to the two fundamental personality traits, extraversion and neuroticism, Moorman and Oliver (1997) demonstrate a clear link at the individual level of analysis of affective dispositions and consumption-based affect with customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty. This effect remains significant after controlling for cognitive judgments of the degree to which customers' expectations are met.

Whereas customer satisfaction is an evaluation of the purchase experience, customer loyalty reflects the bonding of a customer to a certain company, product, or service. Jones and Sasser (1995), for example, define customer loyalty as: "a feeling of attachment to or affection for a company's people, products, or services" (p. 94). This conceptualization of

customer loyalty focuses on the customer's psychological commitment and goes beyond a mere behavioral focus on actual repurchase behavior (e.g. Griffin, 1997). Whereas repurchase intentions constitute an important behavioral aspect of customer loyalty, situational factors (i.e. lack of choice or high costs of switching) might influence a customer's continuous pattern of buying behavior and thus this pattern appears in the light of "spurious loyalty" rather than "true" or intentional loyalty (Day, 1969). Therefore, an attitudinal construct reflecting the customer's psychological attachment, commitment, and behavioral intentions best conceptualizes customer loyalty. Accordingly, measures of customer loyalty often contain items targeting customers' intentions to repurchase and willingness to recommend the company, product, or service to others (e.g. Bei & Chiao, 2006; Ibáñez, Hartmann, & Calvo, 2006; Juhl et al., 2002). Customer loyalty in this sense is more future-oriented and thus may be more relevant than customer satisfaction ratings for strategic marketing and decision-making.

Mean Differences in Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty across Countries

Cultural variables might affect the absolute levels of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on measures of the constructs that demonstrate psychometric equivalence across national boundaries. Indeed, in the context of multinational comparisons of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, one of the most important issues from both practical and theoretical perspectives is the magnitude of cross-national differences in the constructs (Anderson & Fornell, 1994). Of course, the theoretical and practical understanding of cross-national differences in the constructs enhances if between-country variation relate in systematic ways to important cultural variables.

A number of studies examines differences in customer satisfaction levels across a small number of nations or even only two nations (e.g. Brady & Robertson, 2001; Gilbert et al., 2004; Ueltschy et al., 2007). However, as Brett, Tinsley, Janssens, Barsness, and Lytle (1997) point out, differences in mean levels of a construct between a small number of nations

are difficult to explain in regards to cultural influences because of the variety of plausible alternative explanations for the observed differences (e.g. differences in objective conditions, response styles, sample differences etc.). Of course, controlling for all potential alternative explanations is almost impossible in the field of applied cross-cultural research (Triandis, 1994), but this threat becomes even more salient when researchers rely on the comparisons of two nations, or a small number of nations. An increasing number of countries decreases the likelihood of an unsystematic, incidental co-variation of a third variable with the criterion variable of interest and also increases the likelihood that the nations examined in the study substantively vary on the cultural variables of interest (Aycan, 2000; Aycan & Kanungo, 2001; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Therefore, if nothing else, a substantial number of nations constituting the correlation displaying large variations on the cultural variable of interest is a prerequisite for drawing conclusions about the relationships between national mean differences in any criterion construct and cultural variables.

Hofstede's (1980) cultural value dimensions, especially Individualism/Collectivism (I/C) strongly influences previous research on cultural differences. These classical value dimensions show some relation to cross-cultural differences in customer satisfaction or loyalty (e.g. Crotts, & Erdmann, 2000; Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Espinoza, 1999; Furrer, Liu, & Sudharshan, 2000). However, in their recent review on cross-cultural organizational behavior, Gelfand, Erez, and Aycan (2007, p. 496) argue that: "future research sorely needs to move beyond the IC obsession to explore other constructs that explain cultural differences" (see also Schmitt, Allik, McCrae, & Benet-Martínez, 2007). Correspondingly, interest is growing in the relationship between culture and affective variables such as happiness (Gelade et al., 2006) and positivity (Diener et al., 2000).

For example, Gelade et al. (2006) find strong and the highest ecological correlations consistently between affective commitment and the national level of affective variables, such

as extraversion, neuroticism (Steele & Ones, 2002; van Hemert, van de Vijver, Poortinga, & Georgas, 2002) and happiness (Ingelhart, 2005; Veenhoven, 2005).

Building on similar observations, Diener et al. (2000) defines positivity as a cultural dimension reflecting differences in the value of experiencing and expressing positive affect. Diener et al. (2000) originally introduced positivity in the life satisfaction domain to offer a cultural explanation for national differences in levels of global life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2000) that could not be explained by national context variables or other cultural dimensions.

According to Diener et al. (2000), cultural positivity refers to a tendency for members of a shared culture to perceive and evaluate things in a positive light. Diener et al. (2000) define positivity as a cultural variable reflecting a tendency of cultural group members: “to view life experiences in a rosy light because they value positive affect and a positive view of life”. Cultural positivity at the national level of analysis closely relates to positive affectivity (PA) at the individual level of analysis (Watson & Clark, 1992; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988). Watson (1988) defines PA at the individual level as a pleasurable way of dealing with the environment. PA includes both the experience of positive emotions and a high activation level (Cropanzano, Weiss, Hale, & Reb, 2003). Hence, terms such as, “excited, delighted, active, alert, and determined” best describe high PA (Watson, 1988, p.128), whereas, “sluggish, tired, and depressed” best define low positive affectivity (Ibid, p.128).

Cultural positivity at the national level supposedly reflects the influences of cultural socialization patterns that increase or decrease the extent to which individuals within a culture experience and report positive affect. Diener et al. (2000) argue that positivity as a cultural variable is a value that represents the importance placed on the display of positive affect. The authors further indicate that socialization and social influence processes communicate this value to members of the culture. Higher levels of cultural positivity raise the overall level of positive affect reported by individual members of the nation, compared to individuals in nations that are lower in cultural positivity. Moreover, studies show a consistent positive

relationship between measures of affectivity at the national level and national differences in mean levels of overall life satisfaction and job satisfaction.

In a study conducted by Diener et al. (2000), results indicate that cultural positivity at the national level explain a significant incremental portion of the variance in life satisfaction, after controlling for the non-affective variable such as national wealth. Diener et al. (2000) develop an indirect measure of cultural positivity. Whereas cultural differences in acquiescent responding likely bias direct measures of positivity, acquiescent responding less likely biases indirect measures. The basis for the indirect measure of positivity is the *judgment model* of subjective well-being described by Schwarz and Strack (1999). According to Schwarz and Strack (1999), global judgments, such as judgments about one's overall well-being, are more complex and require the processing of a vast amount of information compared to specific judgments. Therefore, global judgments are more apt to rely on judgmental heuristics, such as current affect or mood, compared to specific judgments. Based on this logic, Diener et al. (2000) argue that the discrepancy between global judgments and specific judgments serves as a good indicator and an indirect measure of dispositional positive affectivity.

Using a similar measurement approach, Mueller et al. (2009) support the importance of positivity as a cultural affective variable in the job satisfaction domain. The authors demonstrate strong convergent validity of different measures of cultural positivity previously reported in the literature (Diener et al., 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002). Furthermore, positivity shows a substantial and incremental contribution in predicting cross-cultural differences in job satisfaction after controlling for national development, job conditions, acquiescence, and job type.

Based on these findings, positivity seems to be a promising cultural variable in explaining cross-national differences in customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, these findings are in line with research conducted at the individual level of analysis indicating a substantial relationship between PA and satisfaction ratings in the life

satisfaction domain (e.g. Chiu & Kosinski, 1999; Costa & McCrae, 1980), and the job satisfaction domain (e.g. Agho, Mueller, & Price, 1993; Connolly & Viswesvaran, 2000; DeLoach, 2003; Grandey, Tam, & Brauburger, 2002). Further studies report similar findings for customer satisfaction at the individual level of analysis. Several studies, for example, demonstrate a significant link between individual differences in affectivity and customer satisfaction ratings (e.g. Mooradian & Oliver, 1997; Price et al., 1995; Szymanski & Henard, 2001).

H₁: National differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty associate positively with cross-national differences in cultural positivity.

When comparing measures of customer loyalty with measures of customer satisfaction, however, the assumption is reasonable that the influence of cultural positivity is even stronger for customer loyalty ratings compared to customer satisfaction ratings, owing to differences in the concreteness/abstractness of customer satisfaction versus customer loyalty. As noted above, on the basis of the *judgment model* of subjective well-being described by Schwarz and Strack (1999), Diener et al. (2000) argue that affective cultural influences are stronger on global, more abstract judgments compared to more concrete, experience-based judgments. Thus, much like the well-known contrast between strong and weak situations (Mischel, 1977), the ambiguity or objectiveness of a judgment moderates the effects of cultural positivity on self-reported evaluations. In the context of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, judgments of satisfaction are much more concrete and specific than ratings of customer loyalty. Customer satisfaction judgments usually rely on a set of specific dimensions (e.g. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985, 1988), and normally depend on a respondent's recollection of a particular purchase or consumption experience. These ratings often take place close to or immediately following the purchase or consumption experience. Customer loyalty, by contrast, represents a more global and hypothetical evaluation of future

repurchase intentions, intentions to recommend the product or service, as well as product or corporate identification (Bei & Chiao, 2006; Cronin, Brady, & Hult, 2000).

H₂: Cultural positivity shows a stronger positive relationship with customer loyalty than with customer satisfaction.

However, previous research suggests several alternative explanations of cross-national differences in satisfaction or loyalty judgments. One important variable, which frequently relates with cross-national differences in satisfaction ratings, is the degree of systematic variation across nations in *acquiescent responding*. Acquiescent response style, sometimes called yea-saying, describes a tendency to agree on Likert rating scales regardless of the content of the items (Dolnicar & Grün, 2007a, 2007b). Smith (2004) demonstrates considerable convergent validity among different measures of acquiescence, that a variety of studies and nations uses, indicating systematic cross-cultural differences in acquiescence responding. Differences in the tendency in acquiescence responding relate with cross-national differences in employee satisfaction (e.g. Johnson, Kulesa, Cho, & Shavitt, 2005) and other attitudinal ratings (e.g. Javeline, 1999; Marín, Gamba, & Marín, 1992). Also in the broad domain of consumer behavior, studies demonstrate systematic differences in acquiescent response style between a multitude of nations (e.g. Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Wong, Rindfleisch, & Burroughs, 2003). Therefore, differences in acquiescence responding seem to be an important alternative explanation in explaining cross-cultural differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. However, an indirect method as described previously most often measures cultural positivity.

The indirect measurement of cultural positivity has the advantage that this method minimizes response bias. This advantage is because an acquiescent response set would be independent of item content and specificity, and thus should affect global and specific judgments equally (e.g. Johnson et al., 2005; Smith, 2004), resulting in discrepancy or residual scores that are also independent of the effects of national differences in acquiescent

responding. Similarly, Mueller et al. (2009) demonstrate low correlations between national level indicators of acquiescence and positivity.

H₃: Cross-national differences in cultural positivity relate positively with overall customer satisfaction and customer loyalty ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in acquiescent response style.

However, relevant cultural variables or cultural differences in response styles are not the only explanation of national differences in customer attitudes. National differences in more objective conditions might also be the origin of national differences in customer attitudes.

In this regard, Johnson, Herrmann, and Gustafsson (2002) report higher levels of customer satisfaction in countries with higher economic freedom and competitiveness in comparison with nations scoring lower on these variables. Johnson et al. (2002) explain that higher levels of economic freedom and competitiveness increase pressures on firms to compete in their markets by focusing on customer satisfaction. Therefore, to control for national differences in economic freedom and competitiveness when examining the influence of positivity on customer attitudes seems to be of particular importance. However, the authors hypothesize that differences in national context variables and market conditions might systematically affect customer satisfaction and customer loyalty but that these influences are rather independent on the influence of cultural variables reflecting differences in the value of experiencing and expressing positive affect.

H₄: Cross-national differences in cultural positivity relate positively with overall customer satisfaction and customer loyalty ratings, after controlling for cross-national differences in relevant contextual variables such as economic freedom and competitiveness.

Method

Sample

The sample used in this study consists of customers of a large international logistics firm with the parent company located in Germany. An external consulting company contacted the customers based on contact information provided by the firm. A total of 16,140 customer responses from 64 countries were available. Nation samples with fewer than 100 participants were excluded, because smaller samples are less likely to provide reliable results given the multivariate data analysis techniques (MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999). Table 1 provides the number of participants from each country included in this study.

Table 1 here.

Measure and Procedures

Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty. A multi-item measure of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty was administered to participants in this study which included nine items that are written to measure customer satisfaction, and three items that are written to measure customer loyalty. Of the customer satisfaction items, six are written to reflect satisfaction with specific facets that are consistent with the established ServQual dimensions (Parasuraman et al., 1985, 1988), namely satisfaction with empathy, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, communication, and access. Additionally, one item is written to measure satisfaction with pricing, and two items are written to assess overall customer satisfaction. The items are conceptualized as using direct satisfaction measures (i.e., very satisfied, very dissatisfied) following Peterson and Wilson (1992) who argue that direct satisfaction measures best reflect the final summary evaluation of the consumption experience based on individual comparison standards, differential weighting of various aspects, and affective components.

Respondents used a five point Likert scale to indicate their degree of satisfaction. The internal consistency (alpha) of the customer satisfaction measure is .88 in the present research,

after combining data across nations. Consistent with prior research, the three items that are written to measure the more global customer loyalty construct asked respondents to indicate their intentions to repurchase at this company, their willingness to recommend this company to others, and their intentions to remain a loyal customer (e.g. Bei & Chiao, 2006; Cronin et al., 2000; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Ibáñez et al., 2006). In the present sample, internal consistency of the three item measure is .71, after combining data across nations.

Cultural Positivity. Cultural positivity is measured with a composite index derived from previously published research (Mueller et al., 2009). Mueller et al. (2009) demonstrate substantial correlations at the national level between different nation-level positivity scores available in current research (Diener et al., 2000; Suh and Oishi, 2002). Based on these findings, the study includes a composite measure of cultural positivity by averaging the standardized nation-level positivity values reported in the studies, providing overall nation-level positivity scores for 59 nations. These are the scores used in the present study to measure cultural positivity at the national level.

Acquiescence. Nation-level acquiescence is also measured using a composite index calculated from scores reported in previous research. Specifically, the mean raw work goal importance (IMP) values reported by Hofstede (2001), Smith's (2004) values, and nation-level mean values on the Eysenck Lie Scale reported by van Hemert et al. (2002) are used to calculate the acquiescence index. Smith (2004) recently demonstrated high convergent validity among several of these measures. Values are available from the original studies for between 36 and 53 nations, depending on the study. When necessary, values were recoded to ensure comparability with the other acquiescence measures prior to forming a composite index score by averaging standardized values reported in the original studies.

National Context Variables. Controlling for differences in national context variables is important prior to testing the relationships between the nation-level scores on acquiescence and positivity and the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty measures (e.g. Basabe, Paez,

Valencia, Gonzales, Rime, & Diener, 2002; Drenth & Groenendijk, 1998; van de Vijver & Leung, 1997). Thus, the present research follows Johnson et al. (2002) and controls for both economic freedom and competitiveness using updated indices reported by Kane et al. (2007) and the International Institute for Management Development (IMD) (2007), respectively. Both indices are available for a wide range of nations and allow for a more complex reflection of a national economy than single criteria, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The index of economic freedom (Kane et al., 2007) evaluates 161 countries on a percentage scale with higher scores representing more freedom. The index itself is a summary variable of 10 individual freedoms which are: “vital to the development of personal and national prosperity” (Ibid, p.37).

The competitiveness index of the IMD (2007) reflects how a nation’s environment creates and maintains the competitiveness of enterprises. The rankings of 55 countries are calculated on the basis of 246 criteria. These criteria were selected as a result of extensive research and cover fields ranging from economic performance, government efficiency, business efficiency, and infrastructure.

Analyses

As a first step, analyses were performed to examine measurement equivalence of the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty scales across countries. Measurement equivalence was evaluated using multigroup confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA), with maximum likelihood estimation implemented by the AMOS 5.0 program following the steps suggested by Vandenberg and Lance (2000). Configural invariance was tested by examining the fit of a common customer satisfaction-customer loyalty model in each country. For this analysis, customer satisfaction was modeled as a single latent factor with nine items loading on this factor, and customer loyalty was modeled as a single latent factor with three items loading on this factor. The loading of one item in each factor was fixed to 1.0 to set the scale of the latent factor, and the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty factors were allowed to co-vary

freely in each country. All other parameters were freely estimated. Then, to evaluate metric invariance, this study examined the change in model fit that occurred after restricting the loadings of the scale items on their hypothesized factors to equivalence across the countries.

Overall model fit was assessed using the comparative fit index (CFI), incremental fit index (IFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Values of .90 or above for the CFI and IFI, and values of .08 or lower for the RMSEA are usually taken as evidence of adequate fit (e.g. Vandenberg & Lance, 2000); in the present case, good fit would imply that the baseline model is equivalent across nations. To compare nested models that differed in restrictions on the cross-national equivalence of item loadings, this research examined the change in CFI, as recommended by Cheung and Rensvold (2002). Based on Monte-Carlo simulations, Cheung and Rensvold (2002) concluded that a CFI change that exceeds .01 represents a statistically significant difference between nested models. In the present case, a decrease of greater than .01 in the CFI would imply that measurement parameters differ significantly across countries in the model.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested by calculating zero-order correlations at the national level between the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty measures and the composite acquiescence and cultural positivity indices. To control for differences in national context variables and to test whether cultural positivity explains incremental variance in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, this study performed hierarchical regression analyses to test Hypotheses 1, 2 and 3. In the first step of these analyses, this research entered the index of market competitiveness reported by IMD (2007), and the index of economic freedom reported by Kane et al. (2007). In the second step this study entered the index of acquiescence, and in a third step the composite cultural positivity index at the national level reported by Mueller et al. (2009) was entered in the regression. A significant increase in R^2 after entering the variables in steps two and three of the hierarchical regression indicates an incremental contribution of national acquiescence and cultural positivity, respectively, in explaining cross-

national differences in customer satisfaction and loyalty, after controlling for the national context variables. Hypothesis 4 was tested using the methods described by Steiger (1980) for evaluating differences in dependent correlations.

Results

Table 2 presents results of the structural equation modeling (SEM) analyses that the authors conducted to evaluate measurement equivalence.

Table 2 here.

The baseline multiple groups model for customer satisfaction and customer loyalty fit very well, supporting configural invariance ($CFI = .96$, $RMSEA = .01$). Restricting the measurement weights in the model to equivalence across the samples result in a non-significant change in fit ($\Delta CFI = .01$). This finding supports metric invariance of the measures used for both customer satisfaction and loyalty across nations. Thus, overall, the customer satisfaction and customer loyalty measures show acceptable levels of psychometric invariance across countries, permitting tests of the substantive hypotheses using observed scale scores.

Table 3 presents correlations between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty and the composite nation-level positivity scores.

Table 3 here.

The customer loyalty index shows a significantly positive correlation with cultural positivity at the national level ($r = .50$, $p < .01$, $N = 35$). In contrast, cultural positivity not significantly associates with customer satisfaction levels at the national level of analysis ($r = .20$, $p > .05$, $N = 35$). These results indicate support for Hypothesis 1 for customer loyalty but not for customer satisfaction. Additionally, to test Hypothesis 2, this research evaluates differences in dependent correlations. Results indicate that the correlation involving customer loyalty is significantly greater than the correlation involving customer satisfaction, supporting Hypothesis 2 ($Z = 3.00$, $p < .01$).

Table 4 presents results of the hierarchical regression of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty on the cultural variables.

Table 4 here.

None of the variables explains a significant proportion of the variance in customer satisfaction in the first, second, and third steps of the analysis. However, whereas the economic variables and acquiescence do not relate significantly to variance in customer loyalty, cultural positivity at the national level shows a strong association with customer loyalty at the national level, even after controlling for the cultural context variables, competitiveness and economic freedom, and acquiescence at the nation level of analysis. These results support Hypotheses 3 and 4 for customer loyalty.

Discussion

This research investigates cross-national differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in a large sample of customers of a large multinational organization. Customer satisfaction and loyalty are central constructs in consumer behavior, representing important correlates of valued organizational outcomes, such as customer complaints, word-of-mouth, and repurchasing behavior. Very little is known about the cross-national generalizability of customer satisfaction and loyalty, and the degree to which cultural variables influence levels of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty in different nations. The scarcity of previous research in the area also creates practical constraints on the author's ability to perform and interpret basic comparisons of customer attitudes across nations, and to recommend solutions for organizations. After demonstrating cross-cultural measurement equivalence as a necessary prerequisite to test substantial hypotheses on cross-cultural differences in the constructs of interest (van de Vijver & Leung, 1997), the present research examines relationships between cultural positivity and national differences in customer satisfaction and loyalty and nation-level differences after controlling for acquiescence and relevant national context variables.

The study hypothesizes that nation-level mean differences in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty relate to differences across nations in mean levels of cultural positivity. However, customer loyalty is a broad construct, representing an overall assessment of future repurchase intentions and recommendations to others, whereas customer satisfaction is an evaluation of specific purchase and consumption experiences. Hence, the expectation before the study was that relationships between positivity as a cultural affective variable and customer loyalty would be stronger than those involving customer satisfaction, due to differences between the constructs in their objectivity and specificity. Overall, results of the zero-order correlation analysis reveal significant relationships involving cultural positivity at the national level with the customer loyalty measure, but non-significant correlations with the customer satisfaction measure. This finding occurred despite the fact that the customer loyalty measure includes fewer items and has lower reliability than the customer satisfaction measure. Thus, as expected, customer loyalty, which represents the broader and more general construct, is susceptible to national differences in cultural positivity, whereas this variable less affects customer satisfaction.

Multiple regression analyses reveal a large positive relationship between cultural positivity and customer loyalty, after controlling for the non-affective variables economic freedom and competitiveness, and acquiescence. The cultural positivity index accounts for over 19% of the variance in mean levels of customer loyalty across nations, after controlling for the national economic variables and acquiescence. This finding is similar to the results of Mueller et al. (2009), who find that cultural positivity accounts for between 17% and 35% of the variance in job satisfaction levels across countries, after controlling for nation-level differences in acquiescence. Thus, positivity as a cultural affective variable appears to have consistent positive associations with mean differences across nations in a variety of attitude constructs. This result supports the argumentation of Gelfand et al. (2007) to go beyond the examination of Hofstede's (1980) cultural value dimensions to explain cross-cultural

differences in organizational behavior. Gelade et al. (2006) further suggest going beyond the examination of non-affective variables such as national wealth and rather focusing on affective cultural dimensions.

In the present research cultural positivity does not relate to customer satisfaction ratings, possibly because customer satisfaction represents a more concrete and objective evaluation of specific purchase and consumption experiences. Customer loyalty, however, requires an abstract evaluation of whether the customer is willing to repurchase from the same vendor, and whether they will recommend the company to others and report feeling some sense of loyalty. Such an evaluation is future-oriented and hypothetical, and thus heuristics, such as present affect or cultural norms are likely to influence this evaluation. Whereas cultural positivity appears to act as an influential determinant of abstract or global evaluations, cultural positivity appears to have less effect on evaluations of specific, concrete, singular, or especially memorable experiences. The reason that cultural positivity shows strong relationships with job satisfaction in the research of Mueller et al. (2009) is probably due to the periodical collection of job satisfaction ratings, unlike customer satisfaction ratings, to obtain an assessment of the satisfaction of employees across a very large number of work experiences and facets, allowing for heuristic processes to influence ratings when obtaining the job satisfaction ratings finally. Fewer specific experiences taking place within a shorter time frame than ratings of job satisfaction are probably the fundament for customer satisfaction ratings. Certainly, the present findings highlight a need for additional research to evaluate the degree to which affective cultural variables influence subjective evaluations of a variety of relevant experiences or objects in marketing research. Such research has the potential to contribute to the author's theoretical understanding of cultural influences on human judgment processes and attitude evaluations.

From a practical point of view, the findings of the present research suggest that cultural phenomena are less likely to confound cross-national comparisons of customer

satisfaction ratings than ratings of customer loyalty, which are more future-oriented and global in nature. As a consequence, cross-national data of a comparative nature on the mean levels of customer satisfaction in separate foreign subsidiaries of a multinational firm may provide exceptionally useful information to guide interventions aiming to increase customer satisfaction for the firm. Comparisons involving ratings of customer loyalty, however, may be considerably more complicated, given the observation of robust association between customer loyalty and cultural positivity in the present research. Note that ratings of customer loyalty, including ratings of repurchase intentions, may show only weak associations with actual repurchase behavior in practice. Thus, additional research is important to evaluate whether cultural positivity predicts actual repurchase behavior and word-of-mouth recommendations, or just predicts scores on a self-report measure of customer loyalty. In the meantime, the findings of the present research should encourage additional research on the correlates of customer satisfaction ratings, and should encourage practical comparisons of mean customer satisfaction ratings across subsidiaries of multinational firms.

The present investigation has limitations in a few noteworthy respects. Most importantly, the present study builds on a very limited amount of previous research on the generalizability of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty across national boundaries, and consequently, represents an initial exploration of a few key variables that this research hypothesizes to relate to variations in customer attitudes at the national level. As expected, customer loyalty shows strong and robust relationships with cultural positivity, supporting recent evidence highlighting the relevance of positivity to a wide variety of attitude judgments. Nevertheless, the need to build on the present findings to develop more sophisticated theory about sources of cross-cultural variation in customer attitudes is obvious. Second, the present research, like nearly all of the previous research on national culture and customer attitudes, adopts an imposed etic approach, which entails using a common structured measurement instrument in each of the different national samples. An alternative, emic

approach would involve a more qualitative approach whereby one might develop unique instruments in the different national groups. This limitation is common, resulting in part from the difficulty and high costs of conducting good multinational qualitative research. Despite the possibility that imposes etic measures may constrain cultural variance in multinational research, a number of important and replicable differences across national boundaries are observable with structured measures like those in the present research (e.g. Diener et al., 2000; Donthu & Yoo, 1998; Johnson et al., 2001; Johnson et al., 2005; Mattila, 1999a; Smith, 2004; Suh & Oishi, 2002).

In conclusion, results of the present investigation reveal considerable psychometric invariance of measures of customer loyalty and customer satisfaction, when administered in a large sample of diverse nations. National differences in cultural positivity show robust relationships with customer loyalty, supporting the expectation that abstract or global customer attitude ratings are especially susceptible to important cultural affective variables. This study indicates that cultural positivity does not affect customer satisfaction suggesting that cross-national differences in customer satisfaction ratings may diagnose practical differences in product or service quality in different foreign subsidiaries. The present research should inform further theoretical and empirical work on international variation in customer attitudes and behaviors.

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Table 1

Sample Description

Country	<i>N</i>
Argentina	299
Australia	168
Austria	250
Belgium	136
Brazil	590
Canada	581
China	341
Denmark	188
Egypt	182
France	270
Germany	2843
Greece	108
Hong Kong	228
India	697
Israel	197
Italy	611
Japan	446
Korea, Republic of	404
Mexico	216
Netherlands	218
Nigeria	128
Norway	107
Pakistan	162
Philippines	167

Table 1 (continued).

Country	<i>N</i>
Portugal	246
Russian Federation	358
Singapore	346
South Africa	278
Spain	537
Sweden	265
Switzerland	302
Thailand	150
Turkey	165
United Arab Emirates	224
United Kingdom	450
United States of America	2058

Table 2

Results of Multiple Group Analyses of Model Parameter for Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty Model

Model	X2	df	p	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
Equivalent Form	4778.904	2196	.00	.96	.96	.01
Equal Measurement Weights	5699.645	2581	.00	.952	.952	.01

Table 3

Pearson Correlation between Customer Satisfaction/Customer Loyalty and Cultural Positivity, Acquiescence, and Economic

Variables

	Customer Satisfaction Index	Customer Loyalty Index	Cultural Positivity	Acquiescence	Economic Freedom
Customer Loyalty	.64**				
Cultural Positivity	.20	.50**			
Acquiescence	.29	.39*	.17		
Economic Freedom	.18	.18	.15	-.49**	
Competitiveness - Index	.32	.27	.09	-.55**	.79**

Note. *n* varies from 23 to 36. ** Correlation is significant at $p < .01$ level. * Correlation is significant at $p < .05$ level.

Table 4

Hierarchical Regression of Customer Satisfaction and Customer Loyalty on Economic Variables, Acquiescence, and Cultural Positivity

Predictor	Customer Satisfaction			Customer Loyalty		
	R^2	β	ΔR^2	R^2	β	ΔR^2
Step 1	.13			.08		
Competitiveness - Index		.54			.33	
Economic Freedom - Index		.27			.07	
Step 2	.14		.01	.15		.07
Competitiveness - Index		.48			.11	
Economic Freedom - Index		.26			.03	
AQB - Mean		.10			.34	
Step 3	.17		.03	.39		.24**
Competitiveness - Index		.48			.13	
Economic Freedom - Index		.20			.11	
AQB - Mean		.04			.18	
Cultural Positivity - Mean		.19			.51**	

** Significant at $p < .01$ level.

An Investigation of the Relationships between Affective Organisational Commitment and National Differences in Positivity and Life Satisfaction

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This research examined relationships between nation-level differences in cultural positivity and life satisfaction, and individual affective organisational commitment among employees in a large multinational sample consisting of 30 nations. Hierarchical Linear Modeling was used to take into account the multilevel structure of the data. As hypothesised, cultural positivity and life satisfaction significantly predicted affective organisational commitment, after controlling for job satisfaction and job role (blue-collar workers, white-collar workers, or management) at the individual level, as well as acquiescence, human development and classical value dimensions at the national level. Both life satisfaction and cultural positivity showed incremental relationships with affective organisational commitment when tested together in the same model. By investigating the importance of affective variables as a predictor of job attitudes, this research contributes to our knowledge of cultural universals and particulars in human behavior (cf. Kagitcibasi & Poortinga, 2000; Triandis, 1994). From a managerial point of view, cultural differences in affectivity appear to require attention when interpreting the results of organisational commitment measures administered in multinational contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

The advancing globalisation of business, commerce, and communication has increased the need to examine the cross-cultural generalisability of theory and empirical findings in basic and applied psychology (e.g. Triandis, 1994). Of the constructs of interest in organisational research, affective organisational commitment has been especially important because of its theoretical and empirical linkages with other important variables in organisational behavior, and because of its practical consequences for outcomes of interest to organisational practitioners, such as turnover and absenteeism (e.g. Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). Indeed, for almost as long as researchers have studied affective organisational commitment, interest has been expressed in the degree to which cross-cultural differences exist in the construct and in its correlates (e.g. Morrow, 1993). Cohen (2003), for example, noted that, "if commitment research is to remain relevant, a substantially greater proportion of studies need to go beyond a purely domestic perspective" (p. 258).

However, very little research to date has investigated the influence of cultural variables on organisational commitment (Gelade, Dobson, & Auer, 2008). Although some research of a comparative nature has been reported (e.g. Andolšek & Štebe, 2004; Besser, 1993), previous work in the area has largely been limited to single-nation studies, studies comparing a limited range of countries, or studies that suffered from methodological limitations that complicated the interpretation of results (cf. Vandenberg & Lance, 2000). Furthermore, most studies investigating the relationship between cultural or national variables and different levels of organisational commitment have focused almost exclusively on economic variables such as the gross national income per capita, or classical cultural value dimensions, especially individualism/collectivism (e.g. Fischer & Mansell, 2009; Hattrup, Mueller, & Aguirre, 2007). Results have often shown contradictory findings and have often failed to support hypothesised relationships.

Recently, an emerging body of research has underscored the relevance of affectivity in explaining cross-national differences in organisational attitude constructs, such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (e.g. Gelade, Dobson, & Gilbert, 2006; Mueller, Hattrup, & Hausmann, 2009). Gelade and colleagues (2006), for example, examined the relationship between affective organisational commitment and overall life satisfaction ("happiness"), and observed that national differences in life satisfaction emerged as a significant predictor of affective organisational commitment. Research in other domains has shown that cultural positivity, which represents the value of experiencing and expressing positive affectivity within a particular culture, is a robust predictor not only of global life satisfaction

(Diener, Scollon, Oishi, Dzokoto, & Suh, 2000) but also of job satisfaction across nations (Mueller et al., 2009).

Thus, the purpose of the present research is to build on previous studies of the role of affectivity as a predictor of employee attitudes by examining the relationship between national differences in positivity and life satisfaction and employee affective organisational commitment. In particular, in contrast to previous studies (e.g. Gelade et al., 2006), the hierarchical conceptualisation of the research questions allows us to simultaneously control for confounding variables at the individual and cultural levels of analysis. This is particularly relevant for cross-cultural research due to the complexity of the phenomena, but has not been the case in previous research on the relationship between affective variables and nation-level differences in employee commitment (Gelade et al., 2006). Ruling out alternative explanations for observed differences is the core methodological challenge of applied cross-cultural research (Brett, Tinsley, Janssens, Barsness, & Lytle, 1997; Triandis, 1994; Tsui, Nifadkar, & Ou, 2007).

In the sections below, we first provide a review of the affective organisational commitment construct and a synthesis of previous research on differences in commitment across nations. Research on national differences in life satisfaction and cultural positivity is then discussed, prior to developing the hypotheses about the relationships between these constructs and affective commitment.

Cultural Influences on Affective Organisational Commitment

Affective organisational commitment has often been defined as an “employee’s attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67). Although several conceptualisations of commitment have been discussed in the literature (i.e. affective, continuance, normative), affective organisational commitment has attracted considerably more attention than any of the other conceptualisations of commitment (Cohen, 2003). Affective organisational commitment has been related to a variety of organisational outcomes such as turnover, performance, and absenteeism (e.g. Meyer et al., 2002; Shore & Martin, 1989).

To date, however, few studies have examined differences in the level of affective organisational commitment across nations. Cole (1979), for example, found significantly lower mean scores on a three-item measure of affective organisational commitment among Japanese workers compared to US employees. Dubinsky, Michaels, Kotabe, Lim, and Moon (1992) compared affective organisational commitment ratings of salespeople in the US, Japan, and Korea, and found the lowest commitment ratings among Korean salespeople followed by Japanese salespeople, and higher commitment

among US respondents. These studies were largely descriptive, however, failing to provide cultural explanations or hypotheses to account for observed differences.

The few studies that have examined the relationship between national culture variables and affective organisational commitment have been strongly influenced by Hofstede's (1980) value dimensions, especially individualism/collectivism. Dubinsky, Kotabe, Lim, and Wagner (1997) examined the influence on organisational commitment of enjoyment, achievement, and self-direction as individualistic values on the one hand, and security, restrictive conformity, and pro-social behavior as collectivistic values on the other hand. The variables were all measured at the individual level of analysis. Results showed that individualistic values explained 6 per cent of the variance in organisational commitment in the US sample, whereas collectivistic values explained 7 per cent of the variance in organisational commitment in the Japanese sample. In a cross-national study, Cohen (1999) reported support for the idea that organisational commitment will be higher among collectivists than among individualists in a comparison of Arab and Jewish workers in Israel. Parkes, Bochner, and Schneider (2001) conducted a study comparing Australia and South-East Asia and found higher organisational commitment among collectivists than individualists in Asian but not in Australian organisations.

However, as Brett et al. (1997) point out, differences in the mean levels of a construct between a small number of nations are difficult to explain with regard to cultural influences due to the variety of potential alternative explanations (e.g. differences in objective conditions, response style, sample differences, etc.). Therefore, conclusions about the relationships between national differences in a construct and cultural variables should only be drawn if a substantial number of nations are included in the study, displaying a large variation on the cultural variable of interest. Franke and Richey (2010), for example, suggest including a minimum of seven to 10 nations in the study.

Only a handful of recent studies have attempted to relate national differences in affective organisational commitment ratings to systematic variation in cultural variables using a substantial number of nations. For example, Hattrup, Mueller, & Aguirre (2008) evaluated the cross-national generalisability of affective organisational commitment in two samples of 10 and 25 nations. However, in both samples, results failed to support a relationship between national differences in affective organisational commitment and differences across nations in individualism/collectivism. Similarly, results reported by Gelade et al. (2008) also failed to demonstrate a significant relationship between affective organisational commitment and individualism/collectivism in a sample of 36 nations. Finally, a recent meta-analysis reported by Fischer and Mansell (2009) showed little support for the

relationship between classical value dimensions and cross-cultural differences in affective organisational commitment.

In sum, results from large-scale studies have provided no support for a systematic relationship between nation-level differences in affective organisational commitment and individualism/collectivism. In addition, a replication of Hofstede's ecological factor analysis conducted by Spector, Cooper, and Sparks (2001) failed to support the cultural value dimensions defined by Hofstede. Schwartz (1999) also noted that "even the most comprehensive study (Hofstede, 1990) lacks data from important regions of the world (e.g. the former Eastern bloc)" (p. 24). In their review of cross-cultural organisational behavior, Gelfand, Erez, and Aycan (2007) argue that, "future research sorely needs to move beyond the IC obsession to explore other constructs that explain cultural differences" (p. 496). Ros, Schwartz, and Surkiss (1999) were also critical of research on work values in their review.

The Role of Cultural Affectivity in Explaining Affective Organisational Commitment

Recently, an emerging body of research has underscored the relevance of affectivity in explaining cross-national differences in organisational attitudes (e.g. Gelade et al., 2006; Mueller et al., 2009). Gelade et al. (2006), for example, found consistently strong nation-level correlations between affective organisational commitment and happiness, that exceeded the relationships between affective organisational commitment and socioeconomic variables and classical culture dimension variables. According to Veenhoven (1991), happiness is a synonym for overall life satisfaction that is defined as "the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life favorably" (p. 2). Furthermore, Veenhoven (1996) states: "When we appraise how much we appreciate the life we live, we seem to use two sources of information, we estimate our typical affective experience to assess how well we feel generally (hedonic level of affect) and at the cognitive level we compare 'life as it is' with standards of 'how life should be' (contentment)" (p. 14). This reflects the conceptualisation of life satisfaction as consisting of affective experiences as well as of a cognitive evaluation of objective conditions.

Cultural Positivity. Other research has explicitly conceptualised positive affectivity as a cultural variable which represents cross-national differences in the value of experiencing and expressing positive affect (Diener et al., 2000). Positivity reflects the tendency of members of a cultural group "to view life experiences in a rosy light because they value positive affect and a positive view of life" (Diener et al., 2000, p. 160). Cultural positivity is transmitted through normative and socialisation processes and affects perceptions of the

world, how people remember information and experiences, and how they come to decisions (Diener et al., 2000). In contrast to life satisfaction, cultural positivity excludes the reflection of specific and objective conditions and focuses more specifically on positive affectivity (Diener et al., 2000).

Previous research has demonstrated a substantial relationship between cultural positivity and national differences in life satisfaction. For example, Diener et al. (2000) found a significant positive relationship between cultural positivity and global life satisfaction in a sample of college students from 41 countries. The relationship remained stable after controlling for national wealth. In another study conducted by Suh and Oishi (2002), cultural positivity again showed a substantial relationship with overall life satisfaction at the national level across 39 nations. In addition, Mueller et al. (2009) also showed the importance of cultural positivity in the job satisfaction domain. Cultural positivity was significantly related to job satisfaction ratings after controlling for the effects of acquiescence, perceived differences in working conditions, and national development.

In sum, the findings of recent research suggest the relevance of cultural differences in affectivity in explaining organisational attitudes. Specifically, cultural positivity and life satisfaction both reflect cultural differences in affectivity and thus are promising predictors of individual affective organisational commitment. Whereas life satisfaction also contains cognitive elements representing the evaluation of objective conditions of life, cultural positivity is conceptualised in purely affective terms, representing differences in the valuation of positive affectivity across cultures. Taken together, the literature reviewed above leads to two hypotheses regarding the relationship between nation-level differences in life satisfaction and positivity and affective organisational commitment.

In particular, studies have shown a consistent positive relationship between measures of cultural positivity, national differences in mean levels of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002), and overall job satisfaction (Mueller et al., 2009). However, the vast majority of the research reviewed above investigated these relationships at a single level of analysis only. Specifically, scores on affective commitment (or job satisfaction) in these studies were aggregated across individuals within each country, and then these values were related to variables that were measured at the national level. As Tsui et al. (2007) point out, this is the case for the vast majority of studies conducted to evaluate cross-cultural organisational behavior. They consider this “truly surprising, given the cross-level nature of the phenomenon, which by definition involves the integration of a macro characteristic (national culture) with micro processes (individual and group behavior at work)” (Tsui et al., 2007, p. 39).

In other words, as it is in the present research, the theoretical interest is often in whether a nation-level variable predicts individual variation in a

construct. Therefore, analytic approaches that are able to take this cross-level nature of the data into account are particularly appropriate for cross-cultural studies. One such technique is hierarchical linear modeling (HLM; Hofmann & Gavin, 1998). HLM is especially suitable not only for testing cross-level relationships, but also for simultaneously controlling for alternative explanations at several levels of analysis. Due to the complexity of the phenomena, ruling out alternative explanations is a core methodological challenge of applied cross-cultural research (Brett et al., 1997; Triandis, 1994).

Thus, by extending research on the relationship between cultural affectivity and organisational commitment, retaining the multilevel structure of the underlying data, we predict the following:

Hypothesis 1: Nation-level life satisfaction is positively associated with individual affective organisational commitment.

Hypothesis 2: Nation-level cultural positivity is positively associated with individual affective organisational commitment.

Control Variables. We also investigate important alternative explanations of the expected patterns of relationships at both the individual and the national levels. At the individual level, we control for job satisfaction as the single most important predictor of affective organisational commitment. As a multitude of studies have shown, job satisfaction is a central factor associated with affective organisational commitment at the individual level of analysis (e.g. Meyer et al., 2002). In the meta-analysis by Meyer et al. (2002), for example, correlations between overall job satisfaction and affective organisational commitment ranged from $r = .43$ to $r = .86$ across studies.

Another relevant individual-level construct is job role. Most importantly, job role describes hierarchical differences between employees, including the differences between blue- and white-collar workers. Previous studies indicated a positive correlation between hierarchical level and organisational commitment (e.g. Benson & Brown, 2007). Thus, the present study controls for job role distinguishing between three roles, namely blue-collar worker, white-collar worker, and management.

At the national level, researchers emphasise the importance of controlling for acquiescent response bias when examining data from self-report measures in cross-cultural settings (e.g. Hofstede, 1980, 2001; Smith, 2004). According to Smith (2004), acquiescent response bias is defined as a tendency to use the positive end of response scales and has been consistently shown to vary systematically across nations (Smith, 2004). Cross-cultural differences in acquiescent responding might lead to country-level differences in observed scores that do not reflect actual differences in the construct of interest. It is therefore important to control for acquiescent response bias at the national level (e.g. Hui & Triandis, 1989).

POSITIVITY AND ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

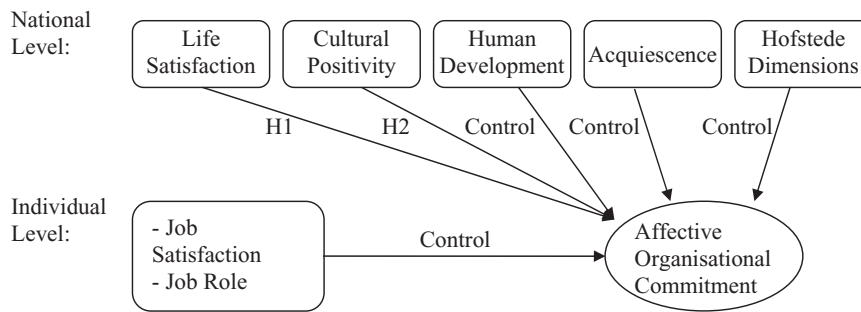


FIGURE 1. Research model of hypothesised relationships in the present study.

Furthermore, national differences in economic conditions have revealed relationships with employee attitudes. In a recent study conducted by Bonini (2007), human development explained 10 per cent of the cross-country variation in life satisfaction. Similarly, Mueller et al. (2009) found that human development was significantly related to job satisfaction at the national level. Therefore, the present study also controls for economic conditions at the national level as conceived by the Human Development Index (UNDP, 2008), a popular composite measure that incorporates the effects of education, literacy, and standard of living. Figure 1 summarises our research model and comprehensively illustrates the hypotheses and control variables at the different levels of analysis. As noted above, the main purpose of the present research is to examine relationships between cultural positivity and life satisfaction at the nation level and affective organisational commitment at the individual level, using multilevel modeling techniques. By doing so, the present study builds on previous research by providing better statistical control of potentially confounding variables at both the individual and national levels, and utilising analytic methods that are specifically adapted to the multilevel nature of the data. The present study is also unique in providing a test of an affective construct, positivity, that is relatively more independent of cognition than life satisfaction, which has been the focus of previous research.

METHOD

Participants

Data from a 2008 employee opinion survey from a large multinational organisation in the automotive industry was used in this study. A total of

105,738 employees in 36 nations participated in the employee opinion survey, representing an overall response rate of 79 per cent. Of those, 3,162 were excluded due to missing data on central variables ($N = 2,150$) or because they could not be clearly linked to their respective countries ($N = 1,012$). To assure sufficiently large within-country samples for the analyses, another 41 employees in two countries with less than 30 observations were excluded, yielding a sample size of 102,535 usable observations from the employee opinion survey. Data for the nation-level cultural variables were unavailable for four countries, resulting in the loss of an additional 9,480 employees. The final sample for all analyses thus contained 93,055 individuals in 30 nations. Table 1 provides the number of participants from each country and nation means for all nation-level variables that were included in this study. The nations included in the analysis represented a broad spectrum of countries across six continents: 16 European nations, eight Asian nations, two South American nations, two North American nations, one African nation and Australia.

Measures and Procedures

Individual-level Variables

Affective Organisational Commitment. A four-item measure of affective organisational commitment was given to participants in this study. The items cover much the same content as those measuring affective organisational commitment in the Organisational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ; Porter & Smith, 1970). The items are: "Looking back I would choose this company again as my employer"; "I am proud to be an employee of my company"; "I would recommend my company without hesitation to good friends as an employer"; and "I feel a sense of loyalty to my company". Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale to respond to each item (1 = no, 2 = mainly no, 3 = partly, 4 = mainly yes, and 5 = yes). In the present sample, internal consistency of the four-item measure was .91 in the combined sample. Reliabilities for the overall scores of affective organisational commitment ranged from .95 in Canada to .84 in Turkey. In sum, reliabilities were adequate within each nation.

Items were originally written in German, then translated into the language most suitable for a given country by external bilinguals, and then translated back by bilingual members of the company until acceptable translation accuracy was achieved.

Job Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured with a 17-item multifaceted inventory, administered along with the affective organisational

TABLE 1
Frequencies and Means by Countries

Country	N	Life Satisfaction ^a	Positivity ^b	Power Distance ^c	Uncertainty Avoidance ^c	Individualism ^f	Masculinity ^g	Human Development Index ^d	Acquiescence ^e
Australia	253	62.50	-0.11	36	51	90	61	0.93	-0.89
Austria	491	60.20	-0.14	11	70	55	79	0.85	-1.17
Belgium	675	57.70	-0.77	65	94	75	54	0.86	-1.61
Brazil	4205	53.60	0.46	69	76	38	49	0.69	0.77
Canada	156	62.30	-0.14	39	48	80	52	0.89	-1.05
China	5436	45.80	-2.74	80	30	20	66	0.65	0.16
Czech Rep.	9482	49.30	-0.45	57	74	58	57	0.84	-1.04
France	4715	53.00	-1.01	68	86	71	43	0.87	-0.75
Germany	33405	56.30	-0.15	35	65	67	66	0.89	-0.92
Greece	292	50.80	-0.35	60	112	35	57	0.85	0.61
Hungary	3723	39.80	-0.86	46	82	80	88	0.80	-0.15
India	780	35.10	-0.35	77	40	48	56	0.51	0.64
Ireland	275	59.60	1.12	28	35	70	68	0.90	-1.09
Italy	939	53.80	0.56	50	75	76	70	0.85	-0.41
Japan	776	53.50	-1.35	54	92	46	95	0.88	-0.77
Korea	1155	46.90	-1.38	60	85	18	39	0.87	-0.06
Malaysia	2869	48.20	-2.48	104	36	26	50	0.74	0.82
Mexico	9671	59.60	0.46	81	82	30	69	0.75	0.87
Norway	209	62.80	-0.30	31	50	69	8	0.94	-0.55
Philippines	1544	41.80	0.98	94	44	32	64	0.63	1.14
Poland	53	48.00	0.46	68	93	60	64	0.79	0.03
Portugal	1651	44.40	0.92	63	104	27	31	0.79	-0.08
Russia	567	36.10	-0.45	93	95	39	36	0.71	-0.04
Singapore	319	54.60	-0.09	74	8	20	48	0.84	0.32
South Africa	1113	29.60	-0.26	49	49	65	63	0.59	-0.25
Spain	647	58.40	0.47	57	86	51	42	0.86	0.08
Sweden	131	62.90	1.47	31	29	71	5	0.89	-0.27
Switzerland	526	65.20	1.57	34	58	68	70	0.87	-1.45
Turkey	230	39.70	-0.84	66	85	37	45	0.67	-0.02
United States	6767	57.90	0.32	40	46	91	62	0.90	-0.38

^a Life Satisfaction obtained from World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010). ^b Positivity composite score calculated based on positivity scores provided by Mueller et al. (2009). ^c Cultural value dimensions reported by Hofstede (2001). ^d Human development scores were obtained from the UNDP's 2008 Human Development Report. ^e Acquiescence composite score calculated based on Work Goal Importance values (IMP) reported by Hofstede (2001), Smith's (2004) values, and nation-level mean values on the Eysenck Lie Scale reported by van Hemert et al. (2002).

commitment scale to all employees of the sample organisation. The measure contained items for several job facets that correspond closely to four of the five facets of the Job Descriptive Index developed by Smith, Kendall, and Hulin (1969) (pay, promotions, co-workers, supervision) and an additional facet designed to measure cooperation between departments. The facets were selected to provide an assessment of attitudes towards relevant *agents* (co-workers, supervision) and of *events and conditions* associated with one's work (compensation, learning and development) to resemble a broad variety of specific job aspects (cf. Locke, 1976). Sample items are: "In our team or group we deal with conflicts in a sensible manner" (co-workers); "The cooperation with other departments is very good" (cooperation between departments); "My immediate supervisor treats me with respect" (supervision); "I am rewarded according to my job performance and accomplishments" (compensation); and "My immediate supervisor supports and promotes me in my professional development" (learning and development). The items used in the present study were selected from a longer version described by Hattrup, Mueller, and Joens (2007) and Hattrup et al. (2008). Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale with the anchors 1 = no, 2 = mainly no, 3 = partly, 4 = mainly yes, and 5 = yes to respond to each item. In the present study a composite job satisfaction score was calculated from the unweighted mean of the five job facets in the measure.

Internal consistency across the 17 items was .91 in the present sample. Reliabilities for the overall scores of job satisfaction ranged from .94 in South Korea and the United States of America to .87 in Turkey. In sum, reliabilities for the overall job satisfaction measure were adequate within each nation.

To test the construct validity and measurement equivalence (ME) of the affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction scales across countries, we used multi-group confirmatory factor analysis with maximum likelihood estimation following the steps suggested by Vandenberg and Lance (2000). To compare nested models that differed in restrictions on the cross-national equivalence of item loadings, we examined the change in the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), as recommended by Cheung and Rensvold (2002). Based on Monte-Carlo simulations, Cheung and Rensvold (2002) concluded that a CFI change that exceeds .01 represents a statistically significant difference between nested models.

Configural invariance was tested by examining the fit of a common baseline affective organisational commitment–job satisfaction model in each country. In the postulated model all affective organisational commitment items were hypothesised to load on the respective latent factor. Job satisfaction was modeled as one higher-order factor with five lower-order factors representing the more specific facets of the general higher-order satisfaction factor. This conceptualisation of job satisfaction is consistent with previous research (e.g. Staples & Higgins, 1998).

TABLE 2
Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis Test of Measurement Equivalence

<i>Model</i>		χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>CFI</i>	<i>IFI RMSEA</i>
Equivalent Form	68585.779	5307	.944	.945	.011
Equal Measurement Weights	78873.269	5727	.936	.936	.012

Results are shown in Table 2. The baseline multiple groups model for affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction fit the data very well, supporting configural invariance ($CFI = .94$, $RMSEA = .01$). To examine metric invariance of the measures for affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction, we restricted the measurement weights in the model to equivalence across the samples. The restriction resulted in a non-significant change in fit ($\Delta CFI = .008$), supporting metric invariance. Thus, overall, the affective organisational commitment and job satisfaction measures show acceptable levels of psychometric invariance across countries, permitting tests of the substantive hypothesis using observed scale scores (e.g. Vandenberg & Lance, 2000).

Job Role. To control for job role we used information available from the organisation that was coded into the survey data. Altogether, 45,181 (49%) of the participants were blue-collar workers, 45,939 (49%) white-collar workers, and 1,935 (2%) held management positions.

Country-level Variables

Life Satisfaction. To investigate the effect of nation-level life satisfaction we used the nation-level scores reported in previous research. Specifically, we used the Happiness Adjusted Life-Years scores for 2000 to 2009 from the World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010). The World Database of Happiness (Veenhoven, 2010) is a register of research on life satisfaction that represents a continuous selection of relevant empirical studies. Scores are available for 149 nations (Inglehart, 2009).

Cultural Positivity. National-level positivity scores were obtained using the procedure described by Mueller et al. (2009). Specifically, we aggregated the positivity scores reported in their paper across different studies to create a positivity composite score. The composite positivity measure described by Mueller et al. (2009) combined data from their own study as well as scores published in two previous research studies (Diener et al., 2000; Suh & Oishi, 2002) that used both direct (Suh & Oishi, 2002) and indirect measurement

methods (Diener et al., 2000). The direct measure (Suh & Oishi, 2002) was obtained from respondent ratings on Bradburn's Affect Balance Scale (Bradburn, 1969), aggregated to the nation level, whereas the indirect measures (Diener et al., 2000; Mueller et al., 2009) derived individual-level scores from the residual in a regression of global satisfaction ratings on specific satisfaction ratings, and then aggregated these to the nation level of analysis. The authors justify aggregation across studies with substantial convergent validity of the positivity measures across studies (i.e. correlations between the three indices correlated between .59 and .67). Furthermore, the aggregation across different sources is likely to increase validity of the obtained measure and also increase the number of country scores available within a single analysis. The composite scores were obtained by averaging standardised scores reported in the three separate studies (Diener et al., 2000; Mueller et al., 2009; Suh & Oishi, 2002). In cases where a nation lacked a value from one or two of these sources, we calculated an average from standardised values on any available values in the three studies.

Cultural Value Dimensions. We also controlled for classical cultural value dimensions to isolate the effects of life satisfaction and positivity on affective commitment. The most influential conceptualisations of cultural value dimensions were those proposed by Hofstede (1980). In particular, in his seminal work he proposed four cultural value dimensions: power distance, individualism/collectivism, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity/femininity. He later added a fifth dimension, long-/short-term orientation, but this dimension was unfortunately only measured in a small number of countries. The most extensively investigated of these dimensions is arguably individualism/collectivism (e.g. Gelfand et al., 2007). We controlled for the original four classical value dimensions in our analysis.

National Human Development. We also incorporated a measure of national wealth and development as a control for objective differences in living conditions across nations. There are numerous indicators of national wealth and development and most of them are highly correlated (e.g. Georgas, van de Vijver, & Berry, 2004). A popular composite measure is the Human Development Index (e.g. Basabe, Paez, Valencia, Gonzalez, Rimé, & Diener, 2002) that incorporates life expectancy at birth, adult literacy rate, the combined gross enrollment ratio for primary, secondary and tertiary schools, and the log of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at purchasing power parity (PPP) in US dollars. We therefore included the Human Development Index for 2008, the year the employee survey was conducted (UNDP, 2008).

Acquiescence. Nation-level acquiescence was also operationalised by a composite index calculated from scores reported in previous research.

Specifically, we used the reversed Work Goal Importance values (IMP) reported by Hofstede (2001), Smith's (2004) acquiescence scores, and nation-level mean values on the Eysenck Lie Scale reported by van Hemert, van de Vijver, Poortinga, and Georgas (2002) to calculate the acquiescence index. Smith (2004) recently demonstrated high convergent validity among several of these measures, with correlations between the indices ranging from .35 to .75. The original studies provided values for between 36 and 53 nations. Following the procedure suggested by Mueller et al. (2009), we computed the composite index by averaging the standardised scores from those studies. As with the positivity composite, we averaged across any available indices in each nation, meaning that more nations could be included in the analysis even if one or two of the index values were missing. Again, this approach is justified by the high correlations between the three measures of acquiescence at the country level of analysis.

Analysis

Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) was used to test our hypotheses. HLM is generally appropriate for a metric response variable whose observations are nested within clusters at some higher level. In the present case, level-1 observations were respondents from the employee attitude survey who were nested within countries, at level-2.

One advantage of Hierarchical Linear Modeling over regression models with aggregated data is a more efficient use of the data. When aggregating data, all lower-level information is discarded.¹ In addition to not taking full advantage of the available data another caveat of this approach is that the higher-level units are easily interpreted as being more homogeneous than they actually are. A second advantage of random intercept models within the Hierarchical Linear Modeling family is that they allow the computation of coefficients of determination similar to those used for ordinary least squares regressions (Rabe-Hesketh & Skrondal, 2008; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002).

To establish a baseline measure of the variance in affective organisational commitment at both the individual and the national level, we first estimate an unconditional or variance-components model without predictors and only a random intercept for countries (Model 1). To test our hypotheses, we estimated two additional models. First, we estimated a model containing the individual-level control variables, job satisfaction and job role, as well as the nation-level control variables, classical cultural value dimensions, human

¹ Nonetheless, performing the same analyses with aggregated data did not substantially change the conclusions, supporting the robustness of the results.

development, and acquiescence (Model 2). In this model, job role was controlled by adding two indicator variables for respondents with blue-collar and higher management roles in the organisation, thus making the largest group of white-collar workers the reference category in the following models. Finally, we estimated the full model by adding life satisfaction and cultural positivity at the national level (Model 3). The full reduced-form model was thus specified as follows:

$$AC_{ij} = b_{00} + b_{10} * \text{job satisfaction}_{ij} + b_{20} * \text{blue-collar}_{ij} + b_{30} * \text{management}_{ij} + b_{01} * \text{life satisfaction}_j + b_{02} * \text{positivity}_j + b_{03} * \text{power distance}_j + b_{04} * \text{uncertainty avoidance}_j + b_{05} * \text{individualism}_j + b_{06} * \text{masculinity}_j + b_{07} * \text{HDI}_j + b_{08} * \text{acquiescence}_j + \epsilon_{ij} + v_j.$$

Except for the indicator variables for job role, all variables were centered using the grand-mean.

RESULTS

Table 3 displays correlations and descriptive statistics for all level-2 variables. As can be seen, nation-level life satisfaction and cultural positivity showed a medium correlation of .34 ($p = .06$). Whereas positivity was only significantly related with power distance ($r = -.39, p < .05$), life satisfaction was significantly positively correlated with individualism ($r = .39, p < .05$) and human development ($r = .79, p < .001$), and negatively correlated with power distance ($r = -.55, p < .01$) and acquiescence ($r = -.47, p < .01$).

As described above, we first estimated an unconditional model to establish a baseline for the estimated individual- and country-level variance components for affective organisational commitment. Results are displayed in the column labeled *Model 1* in Table 4. As the estimate for the unconditional intra-class correlation ρ indicates, about 12 per cent of the total variance in affective organisational commitment is at the nation level. A likelihood-ratio test for the country-level variance component indicates that the variation at national level is significant ($\chi^2(1) = 8855.12, p < .001$). Accordingly, affective organisational commitment varies significantly between nations. Therefore, the specification of a hierarchical model is justified.

Next, we added the control variables job satisfaction and job role at the individual level, as well as acquiescence, the Human Development Index, and the classical cultural value dimensions at the national level, for the prediction of individual affective organisational commitment. As shown in the column labeled *Model 2* in Table 4 these variables explained about 29 per cent of the total variance in affective organisational commitment.

To test the hypotheses that national differences in life satisfaction and cultural positivity are positively related to individual affective

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Life Satisfaction	51.65	9.38	—							
2. Positivity	-0.18	1.00	.34	—						
3. Power Distance	57.33	21.87	-.55**	-.39*	—					
4. Uncertainty Avoidance	66.00	25.93	-.15	-.03	.09	—				
5. Individualism	53.77	21.94	.39*	.32	-.67***	-.07	—			
6. Masculinity	55.23	19.54	-.09	-.14	-.07	.10	.12	—		
7. Human Development Index	0.80	0.11	.79***	.19	-.62***	.11	.48**	-.09	—	
8. Acquiescence	-0.25	0.73	-.47**	-.10	.71***	-.06	-.66***	-.13	-.63***	—

Note: Scores for positivity and acquiescence were calculated by averaging standardised scores from previous research. Therefore, the resulting values express positivity and acquiescence in terms of quasi-standardised values, but the mean is unlikely to be exactly equal to zero in any real data set.
 $n = 30$; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

TABLE 4
Full Maximum Likelihood Estimates for Random Intercept Hierarchical Linear
Models with Affective Organisational Commitment as Dependent Variable
(Reference Group: White-Collar Workers). Unstandardised Coefficients,
z-Statistics in Parentheses

	<i>Model 1: Unconditional</i>	<i>Model 2: Control variables</i>	<i>Model 3: Full model</i>
<i>Fixed part</i>			
Constant	3.94*** (59.72)	3.79*** (80.59)	3.78*** (101.35)
Individual-level predictors			
Job Satisfaction		0.67*** (174.96)	0.67*** (174.95)
Blue collar		0.20*** (31.78)	0.20*** (31.78)
Management		0.17*** (8.25)	0.17*** (8.23)
Nation-level predictors			
Life Satisfaction			0.02** (2.74)
Positivity			0.10* (2.22)
Power Distance		−0.00 (−0.79)	0.00 (0.24)
Uncertainty Avoidance		−0.00 (−0.15)	0.00 (0.64)
Individualism		0.01* (2.00)	0.00* (2.06)
Masculinity		−0.00 (−1.44)	−0.00 (−1.50)
HDI		−0.61 (−1.06)	−1.94** (−2.87)
Acquiescence		0.29** (2.90)	0.21* (2.56)
<i>Random part:</i>			
SD person-level error	0.99*** (431.34)	0.86*** (431.34)	0.86*** (431.34)
SD country-level error	0.36*** (7.64)	0.23*** (7.57)	0.18*** (7.44)
Log lik.	−131332.34	−117966.41	−117959.16
<i>Derived estimates</i>			
ρ	0.12	0.07	0.04
Person-level R^2	0.00	0.25	0.25
Country-level R^2	0.00	0.57	0.74
R^2	0.00	0.29	0.31

Note. z-statistics in parentheses
n = 93,055; * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

organisational commitment, we added those two variables to the model containing the control variables. Results are displayed in the column labeled *Model 3* in Table 4. Nation-level positivity and life satisfaction both reach significance, increasing affective organisational commitment by 0.10 points ($p < .05$) and 0.02 points ($p < .01$), respectively, for every unit increase, holding all other variables constant. These results provide support for the hypotheses. Moreover, as expected both individual-level control variables, namely job satisfaction and job role, are significant. Job satisfaction increases affective organisational commitment by 0.67 points for every unit increase ($p < .001$), holding all covariates constant. In addition, blue-collar workers' affective organisational commitment is on average 0.20 points higher than that of white-collar workers ($p < .001$), while that of employees in management positions is on average 0.17 points higher ($p < .001$), holding all covariates constant. At the nation level the Human Development Index and acquiescence also reach significance, changing affective organisational commitment by -1.94 ($p < .01$) points and 0.21 ($p < .05$) points, respectively, for every unit increase, holding all covariates constant. Finally, of the cultural value dimensions only individualism shows a significant effect on affective organisational commitment, increasing it less than 0.01 points for every unit increase ($p < .05$), holding all covariates constant. Taken together the independent variables explain 31 per cent of the total variance in affective organisational commitment. More specifically, they explain 25 per cent of the individual-level variance and 74 per cent of the nation-level variance. Together, national life satisfaction and cultural positivity explain an additional 17 percentage points of the country-level variance in affective organisational commitment after controlling for the potentially confounding variables. The prediction of this model was significantly superior to the model with only the control variables (*Model 2*) ($\chi^2(1) = 14.50$, $p < .001$).

Overall, results support both Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2, that nation-level life satisfaction and cultural positivity are positively associated with affective organisational commitment ratings, controlling for other confounding variables at the individual and national levels. More importantly, the incremental effect of the cultural affective variables over and above the control variables is larger than the contribution of the commonly investigated nation-level variables of socioeconomic development, cultural value dimensions, or acquiescent response. Moreover, positivity, which is a relatively purer measure of affect compared to life satisfaction which comprises both affect and cognition, showed independent effects on commitment after controlling for life satisfaction.

To evaluate whether the results might have been distorted by the disproportionally larger size of the German sample, we repeated the analysis with a randomly selected subsample of 10,000 employees from Germany,

which is similar in size to the second and third largest country samples of Mexico ($n = 9,671$) and the Czech Republic ($n = 9,482$). Additionally, we re-ran the analyses reducing all larger countries to the mean country size without Germany of 2,056 employees. In each case, results differed very little, showing the same pattern of relationships and levels of significance.

DISCUSSION

Although there has been a persistent interest in cross-cultural differences in affective organisational commitment and in its correlates (e.g. Morrow, 1993), little research has investigated the relationships between affective organisational commitment ratings and important cultural or national variables using sufficiently large samples of countries (Gelade et al., 2008). Furthermore, most studies investigating the relationship between cultural or national variables and affective organisational commitment have focused almost exclusively on classical cultural value dimensions, and in particular on Hofstede's (1980) individualism/collectivism dimension, to explain differences across cultures. In general, results have provided little support for a systematic relationship between nation-level differences in affective organisational commitment and the classical cultural value dimensions (e.g. Fischer & Mansell, 2009; Gelade et al., 2008; Hatrup et al., 2008), suggesting a need to examine other variables representing important cultural or national differences that might relate to affective organisational commitment.

Results of the analyses showed that nation-level differences in life satisfaction and cultural positivity significantly improved the prediction of affective organisational commitment, after controlling for a variety of potentially confounding variables. In particular, cultural positivity and nation-level life satisfaction explained an additional 17 percentage points of the country-level variance of affective organisational commitment after controlling for job satisfaction and job role at the individual level, as well as national human development, acquiescence, and the Hofstede cultural value dimensions at the country level. Positivity, which is arguably more independent of cognition than is life satisfaction, shared unique variance with affective commitment after controlling for life satisfaction.

Theoretical Implications

In the last decade, there has been a revival of interest in the relationship between affectivity and cross-national differences in attitude constructs such as global life satisfaction (Diener et al., 2000; Gelade et al., 2008) and job satisfaction (Mueller et al., 2009). Few studies, however, have examined the influence of variables reflecting cultural differences in affectivity on affective

organisational commitment. Gelade et al. (2006) found a substantial relationship between national differences in life satisfaction and affective commitment in a study of 49 nations. According to Veenhoven (1991), life satisfaction is defined as “the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life favorably” (p. 2), and does not consist exclusively of affective experiences, but also cognitive evaluations of objective conditions (e.g. Veenhoven, 1996). To control for some of these differences in objective conditions, we included job satisfaction and job role at the individual level, and human development at the national level, as control variables in our analysis.

Thus, compared to the findings reported by Gelade et al. (2006), our results provide clearer evidence of the effects of affective variables, independent of any confounding effects at the individual and national levels. Furthermore, we also investigated the effects of cultural positivity as a predictor of affective commitment in an attempt to better isolate the effects of affect on employee commitment. Diener and colleagues (2000) introduced cultural positivity as a cross-cultural construct reflecting differences in pure affectivity. According to Diener et al. (2000), positivity reflects cross-cultural differences in the value of experiencing positive affectivity, and is transmitted to individuals through socialisation and acculturation. We expected that nation-level differences in both life satisfaction and positivity would relate to affective organisational commitment. This is because both constructs represent cultural differences in the tendency to experience and express positive affect, which through socialisation and acculturation come to influence individual affective reactions, including affective organisational commitment. Unlike life satisfaction, however, positivity should reflect a more pure measure of affect, and thus, our findings provide particularly strong support for the notion that affective differences at the national level may have important structural relationships with attitudes expressed at the individual level.

It is especially noteworthy that such relationships were observed in the present study after controlling for individual job satisfaction. This suggests a rather robust direct effect of cultural differences on individual affective organisational commitment that is unmediated by individual job satisfaction and other confounding variables, thereby reflecting cultural differences in affectivity that potentially permeate life domains, from general affectivity to affective attachment to a specific organisation. In many ways, these results resemble findings that have been reported at the individual level of analysis demonstrating that positive dispositions, such as enthusiastic, interested, and excited tend to co-occur (e.g. Watson et al., 1988). However, the present results especially underscore the unique importance of cultural differences, measured at the nation level of analysis, in shaping individual affective commitment to a specific organisation.

Practical Implications

From a practical point of view, the findings of the present research underscore the need to consider the potential role of cultural differences in affectivity when comparing organisational commitment scores across nations. Neglecting the influence of affective variables such as cultural positivity could contribute to mistaken interpretations when comparing affective organisational commitment scores across nations. More specifically, affective organisational commitment ratings not only reflect the “employee’s attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization” (Meyer & Allen, 1991, p. 67) but also cross-cultural differences in constructs reflecting affectivity.

Pragmatically, researchers and practitioners should consider controlling statistically for nation-level differences in positivity before attempting to interpret mean differences in commitment levels of organisational units that are located in different countries. Failure to do so could lead to seriously mistaken conclusions. Our findings might suggest, for example, that a practitioner who observed lower commitment scores among members of subsidiaries located in countries with lower positivity, such as China, Malaysia, Korea, or Japan, compared to countries with higher positivity, such as Switzerland or Sweden, might arrive at the mistaken conclusion that the differences were solely due to differences in commitment when in fact a large proportion of the variance may actually be accounted for by cultural differences in stable affectivity. Whereas individual affective commitment might be modified by organisational interventions designed to improve employee attitudes through improvements in working conditions, stable affectivity is much more the result of cultural socialisation and would therefore be much less responsive to changes made at the level of one’s work organisation.

One practical option for dealing with national differences in positivity when interpreting employee attitude scores is to focus comparisons at the level of within-nation comparisons. For example, an organisation could compare employee attitude results with benchmark data collected within the same nation. Because of national differences in positivity and other variables, this would probably provide more informative diagnostic information than comparisons done within a single firm across national subsidiaries.

The results of the present research also have practical relevance in the context of expatriate adjustment and performance. Cultural patterns of socialisation lead to stable differences in affectivity that are likely to persist throughout much of one’s lifetime. This means that expatriate workers are likely to retain some of their home country values, attitudes, and perspectives when they move abroad. Cultural differences in stable affectivity may emerge

as an issue to consider when interpreting the expressed attitudes and commitments of expatriate workers. Lower levels of job satisfaction and commitment might be reported by expatriate workers from nations with lower levels of cultural positivity. Similarly, supervisory staff from cultures that are higher in positivity might have higher expectations for the expressed affect, satisfaction, and commitment of their employees than supervisors that are from cultures that are lower in positivity.

Study Limitations and Future Research

Of course, like all empirical research, the present investigation was limited in a few noteworthy respects. Perhaps most significantly, the present study investigated differences across national boundaries in an effort to study the effects of cultural positivity and life satisfaction as cultural constructs. As Diener et al. (2000) suggested, cultural differences in positivity are determined by culturally bound socialisation processes and transmitted by cultural norms. According to Georgas et al. (2004), the use of national boundaries to operationalise culture is commonplace in the literature and furthermore there are good reasons to assume that important differences exist between countries in a variety of cultural dimensions and patterns (Hofstede & Peterson, 2000). However, variation within national boundaries may be as important as variation between nations in the affect-related constructs investigated in this research. Therefore, we encourage researchers to extend the present findings by examining variation in affective constructs among individuals and naturally occurring and constructed groups.

Furthermore, the data collected for the present research, as well as the values for cultural positivity at the national level, relied on an imposed etic approach. The etic approach requires using a commonly structured measurement instrument in each of the disparate national samples. In contrast, an emic approach would involve a more qualitative approach, perhaps relying on unique instruments developed in the different countries. Due to the difficulty of conducting good multinational qualitative research, the use of imposed etic measures is a common limitation of almost all cross-national research. However, a number of important and replicable differences across national boundaries were observed in the present research, and have been observed by other authors using structured measures (e.g. Hofstede, 1980).

Conclusions

Although the current study provides new insight into individual affective organisational commitment ratings across nations, many interesting questions are in need of further research. As noted above, further research is needed that takes affective variables more into account when explaining

cultural differences in important organisational behaviors, attitudes, and outcomes. Furthermore, research is needed that focuses on conceptual and empirical similarities and differences among affective variables across cultures. Moreover, research should examine relationships between variables reflecting cultural affectivity such as cultural positivity and other organisationally relevant constructs, such as employee engagement, turnover intentions, and organisational citizenship. We hope that the present research encourages further theoretical and empirical work on affective organisational commitment and nation-level affective variables such as cultural positivity.

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